The OPEN COURT

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

FOUNDED BY EDWARD C. HEGELER

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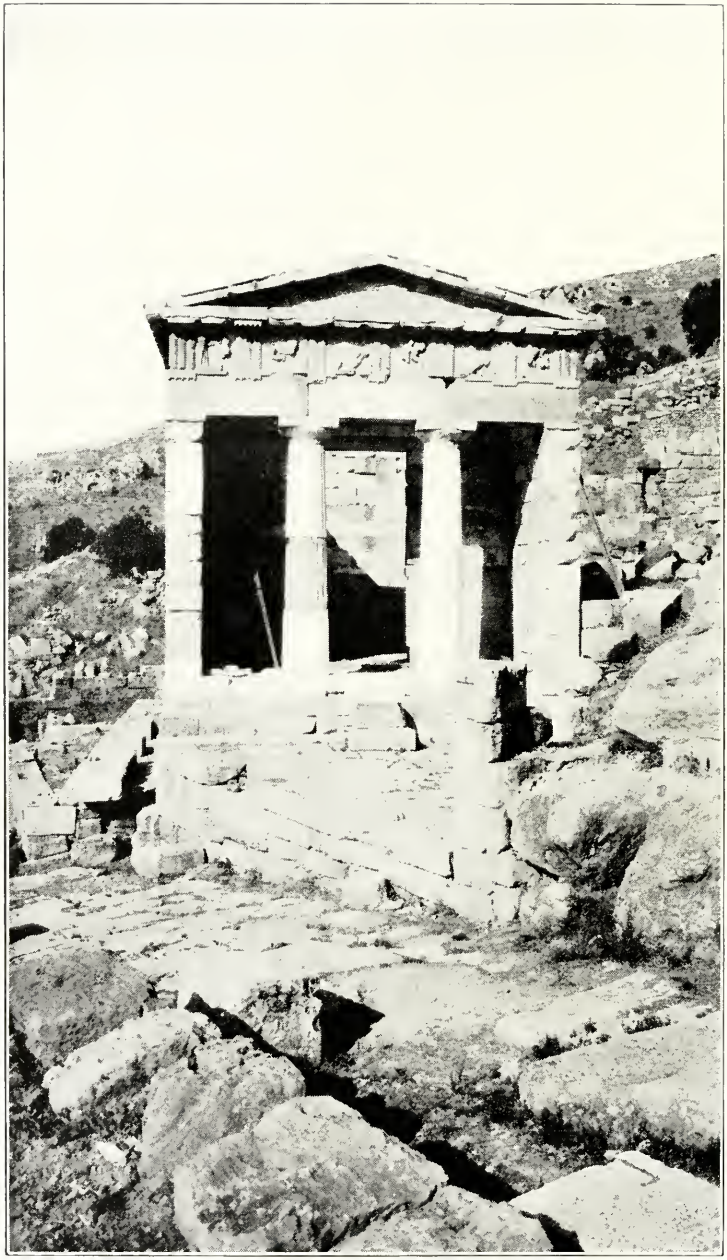


The Treasury (restored) of the Athenians at Delphi.

Frontispiece to The Open Court

THE OPEN COURT

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE
Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea.

Volume XLV (No. 12) DECEMBER, 1931 Number 907

THE FLOWERING OF GREECE

BY ARTHUR STANLEY RIGGS
Director, Archaeological Society of Washington.

NO complete story of Greek archaeology can probably ever be written, for there is no end to it. The amazing spirit and power of the Greeks during their productive period so swept the world that what they created can never be wholly recovered because of the extent of its diffusion. Many people thought that when the Germans had finished with Troy, Olympia, Pergamum, Miletus and Priene, the French with Delphi and Delos, the British with Knossos, Megalopolis and Sparta, and the Americans with Assos, the Argive Heraeum, Nemea and Corinth, there was nothing more to be done of similar importance.

Where, to be particular, could one find another Troy, another Mycenae, another Knossos, or locate a Schliemann or an Evans to excavate either? Yet before we knew anything about it, the Crown Prince of Sweden had quietly unearthed the forgotten ruins of little Asine, and taken from its prehistoric rubbish heaps and graves artefacts of metal, stone and ceramics of the greatest interest, besides throwing new and much needed light upon the dimmest, least comprehended period of Hellenic prehistory. Today Americans are tearing up the Greek capital by the square block to get at the remains of the Golden Age; the British are hard at work on another site, close to the Acropolis; the Greeks themselves are delving at Eleusis and other ventures are going blithely forward despite the "hard times" and the difficulties certain to be encountered.

Despite all this, however, we shall never have the full tale of Greek supremacy. For one thing, the concealing centuries have imposed a veil too thick to be rent except in a few scattered places. The Greeks themselves realize this, and with Levantine calm are

content to take things easily, allowing foreign capital and skill to pay their native labor and uncover for the benefit of Greece, first, and then for the rest of mankind, whatever remains to be found. A very clever and Tom-Sawyerish attitude this; yet it is not without its logic. Greece is not a rich country by any stretch of imagination, and if archaeological research is to go on at all on the scale necessary now to secure satisfactory results, it must be adequately financed as well as directed with the greatest skill available.

The remarkable change in archaeological methods which has developed during the past few years is also a factor in the situation. While it is unlikely that this will enable the scholars to bring out anything which will radically alter our conception of either Greek thought or Greek achievement, it will certainly ensure an infinitely greater precision of detail and in all probability a greater amount of accurate general knowledge for each excavated area. In a word, the methods of Schliemann and other pioneers, fairly adequate for the seventies and eighties of the last century, are out of the question today. Meticulous statements of fact have superseded guesswork and opinion: even in so dry a matter as the recording of specimens, precision and detail is now the rule. On its practical side, archaeology now works not merely with a view to discovering objects and making the proper attributions as to time and author, but to bringing back into being as nearly as possible the original condition. Half a century ago the entire method was different. Students of the classics, fired with enthusiasm by their literary stimuli, hunted definite objects: here a statue, there a single building, somewhere else a grave. But they had no experience in excavating, and no large purpose. The results of their work, though often astonishingly gratifying, were frequently destructive to a degree unimaginable today. Restoration was all but unheard of. Systematic campaigns to secure funds for research, and for rehabilitating ruined structures had not yet been considered. Even with the freeing of the gem-like temple of Athena Nikè and of the Erectheum from the Turkish works into which both had been solidly built, the acquisitive instinct continued to prevail. Only in recent years has that attitude changed. For one thing, excavators have learned by experience the wastefulness of abrupt methods, and the inconclusive or incomplete readings possible with them. They have also reconsidered their classics in a spirit of broader

Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931 *All rights reserved*

Section of the Pediment sculptures of the Hekatompedon, one of the earliest temples on the Acropolis at Athens.

interest, and so face their problems with a much firmer grasp of both principles and eventualities. In consequence—and this has been especially the case in Greece and Egypt—the literary sources have taken on a new and deeper significance, while archaeology has realized that something tangible must emerge from its field studies to justify them fully to a public now awake and eagerly anticipating further light on ancient problems. Of what real use, after all, is a temple, a statue, an inscription, if it does not convey to us something very definite as to the conditions which produced it centuries ago? The replacing of the shattered blocks and drums of the Parthenon, with all the studious and affectionate care imaginable, is the most obvious and impressive example. From being a mere noble ruin, despoiled of most of its sculptural beauty by Lord Elgin, the great fane of Athena—though a ruin still—is once more a shrine, the living embodiment of both a racial cult and a miracle of art. The same principle is everywhere at work, frequently with American money—in the recovery of the Athenian Agora, in clearing away the debris over the ruins of Eleusis, in other difficult sites.

The biggest job of all, of course, is the endeavor to clear the Agora. Financed and directed by Americans, it began this last spring where the excavations of Doerpfeld stopped some thirty years ago. The task for the first season was not to try to make some spectacular discovery, but to locate a topographical point of departure to check the accuracy of the description of the Agora of classical times by that indefatigable guide-book-writer, Pausanias, and so to plan a comprehensive scheme of procedure to give the greatest results with the least inherent difficulties. It was my good fortune to visit this excavation this past summer, and to see how well T. Leslie Shear of Princeton had directed his work. For the benefit

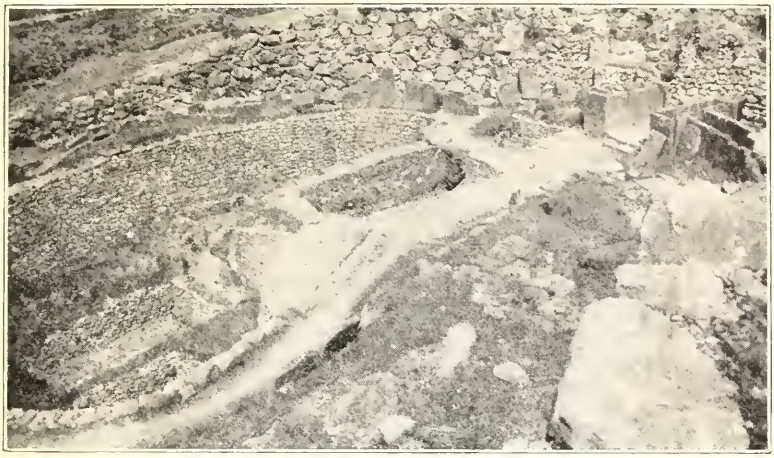
of those who do not know precisely under what auspices the work is being conducted, nor what are the relations between the various American organizations and the Greek Government, it may be worth while for me to quote verbatim part of a letter just received from Professor Shear in which he states the matter clearly as follows:

> "The Archaeological Institute has not had in the past and has not now any connection of any sort whatever with the excavation of the Athenian Agora which is conducted by the American School at Athens, an independent corporation, incorporated under the laws of Massachusetts, with which the Archaeological Institute has no legal connection. For the management of the excavations the Trustees of the American School have established an Agora Commission of which the Chairman is Professor Capps."

In view of the vast scope of this new work, and the possibility that the results gained may be of great importance in determining the hitherto unknown details of certain aspects of Athenian life, it is worth while to go back to the very earliest times and ask when Greek history really begins, and what we know of it as developed by archaeological research. The feeling of some fifty years ago that the First Olympiad, in B.C. 776, marked the beginnings of truly Greek history has, in the light of recent discoveries, given place to a determined search for data as far back as the fourth millenium before our era. As a matter of fact, too, no summary of any account can be given of Greece because of the nature of the case until so late in historic times that the glories of a happier age have been largely extinguished. Admitting, therefore, the disjointed nature of any treatment and the innumerable lacunae, it seems fair to begin the tale, so far as archaeology is concerned, with the epochal work of Schliemann and Evans at Troy and Knossos.

Heinrich Schliemann began with Troy and went on to Mycenae. But he could not tell us who the Greeks were. Myres had still to grow up before making his elaborate if inconclusive study on that score, and we knew nothing of the Palaeolithic in what was later Greece. Even yet we do not know whether the insular Minoan and the subsequent so-called Mycenean cultures of the mainland were the work of even partly Hellenic peoples. If they were, why can we not read the inscriptions at Knossos, Tiryns and Mycenae? Further,

why is there so striking a difference between the religious cults of archaic times and those of the later historic period? Archaeology still has a major problem to solve here and none of the poets, philo-



The Shaft or Pit Tombs in the Agora of Mycenae. Excavated in 1876 by Schliemann who believed them to contain the bodies of King Agamemnon, Cassandra and the King' followers.

sophers, historians or descriptive writers gives us the slightest clue. Only in the most general way can we assume what has been called the Pelasgian culture, which was possibly Semitic in origin, and which after a thousand or two years, spread from the isles of the sea into the Greek mainland about B.C. 2000. This civilization, which long preceded the Homeric epoch, has also been called Ægean. Some five centuries after its entry, Knossos was destroyed and Crete ceased to be the focus of Mediterranean life. About the same time the first of the great invasions swept Greece, and the Achaeans (Aeolians) and Ionians appear on the scene. Did they perhaps found Troy on their way westward? Again we have only legend for answer. But four centuries more and the "Mycenean" Greeks of Agamemnon laid siege to Troy in B.C. 1194 and gave Homer the theme for his immortal *Iliad*.

Standing upon the acropolis of Mycenae and looking over the hilly range of the Argolid, one is forced to a fresh sense of wonder that any race so hedged about with natural barriers and dif-

ficulties could accomplish what the Greeks did. The same hilly view (not only here, but throughout Greece) also explains perfectly the reasons why the story of Greece is one of patchwork and politics. Diverse of race by origin, held firmly apart by geographical conditions, rendered necessarily self-sufficient by the widely different economic and political conditions which research has clearly shown us have always existed in Hellas, it is not to be wondered at that the Greek people developed as tribes, with tribal aims and instincts rather than as a nation until the force of circumstances in the form of the Persian threat compelled them to at least a temporary unity. Even in the perilous days from Marathon (490 B.C.) through Plataea (479) and Mykale to the practical recognition of Athens in 478 as the factual head and representative of Greece, there was no truly national feeling. Athens against Corinth, Athens against Sparta, Athens agaist Persia again, goes the story, with all the rest of Greece taking sides, never to eradicate rebellion and to establish a national power, but for purely selfish, short-sighted purposes. Naturally the moment the advantage sought was gained, such alliances as existed fell apart from jealousy and self interest. Only with the Golden Age of Pericles did anything like overwhelming might and distinction emerge from the welter of cross purposes and conflicting ideals. How much of the heart of Periclean Athens is still to be found safely buried below the accumulated debris of 1600 years? Will any venture to predict the nature of the discoveries to be made as the Agora of the fourth century grudgingly comes back to the light of day? Already Professor Shear has found inscribed stelae, statues, pottery and innumerable small objects giving earnest of what may come. But no one knows, and none dare guess, whether the spade will produce papyri and insciptions to throw new light on dim features of the past. On one point only most archaeologists are in agreement. None of them anticipate discoveries which will modify to any extent our views of Greek culture. There may—and it is hoped there will—be much to help in carrying Greek history farther back and giving it connections and a philosophy now often lacking. But beyond that, probably little but beauty and intrinsic interest.

Last summer, despite the heat of what seemed an unusually torrid season, I visited many of the principal sites, not because in the majority of cases there was anything new being done, but

to revizualize the constructive archaeology which in half a century has made Greece a land of dramatic and inspiring fact instead of the rather impossible country of moonshine and heroics which

Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931 *All rights reserved*

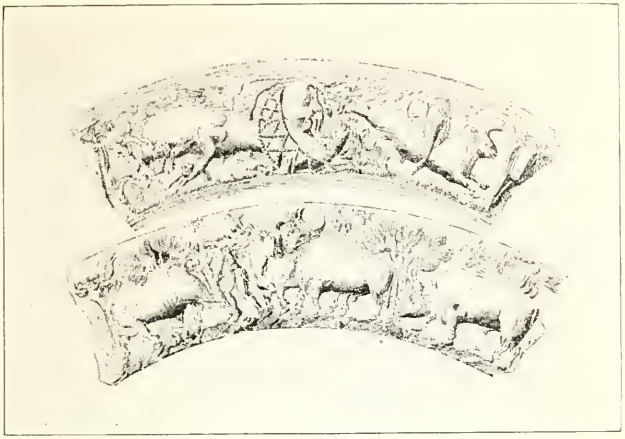
Archaic statue in polychrome of a Greek lady.

Byron sang and we knew only from our reading of the classics. The lovers of Greece, like the lovers of Spain, have worked her more harm than good by their panegyrics, forgetting that the sim-

ple facts in her story are in themselves drama of an higher order than anything her poets knew. For the Greek story, as archaeology has so clearly shown, is no clumsy tale of purely factitious events but the slow and painful growth of character hammered out in a tough flesh and an ebullient blood. Vanished Argos, the mighty, which wrecked its neighbors Tiryns and Mycenae; Epidaurus, and sacred Olympia; Delphi on its niche upon stern Parnassus, and Eleusis-by-the-Sea, all give tongue to the wonder. Commonplace little modern Sparta does it; Athens, too. Everywhere is visible the composite gradually precipitated by the rough intermingling of the invading northern tribes with the highly cultured Aegean stock. The barbarian immigrants had youth, vigor, a generally sane and wholesome religion or philosophy of life, and marked aptitude for war. When these characteristics came into violent contact with the highly sensitive and refined natures of the Aegeans, the resulting blend was very slow in crystallizing, but in the end blossomed into the most remarkable flower culture has ever produced.

Of written records for this early period we have nothing beyond the meagre references in Thucydides and Herodotus. In 1900, however, Sir Arthur Evans began those excavations at Knossos which have since given us a factual picture from whose details we can construct an history as accurate in its major parts as though it had been written out for us. We know, for example, the approximate dates of the rise, culmination and fall of this Ægean culture. The glory of its kings, the luxury in which they and their courts lived, contrast sharply with the poor circumstances of their people, and point a story of conscienceless exploitation quite as clearly as the records of their business reveal a commercial race whose trade was necessarily waterborne. We know that, relying upon their stalwart navy, the Cretans had no true "secondary defense" notwithstanding their cavalry of archers. Excavation has given us tormenting inscriptions which as yet we cannot read, and wall-paintings vividly portraying the chief interests of the populace as religion, art and sport. From excavations on both the mainland and the Greek islands have come innumerable objects—jewelry, gold masks, statuettes, pottery, paintings, etc.—clear evidence of colonial expansion and the transplanting of the Ægean arts far from Crete. Two of the most spirited and beautiful specimens in the world of the gold-

smith's work are the marvelous gold cups dug from a grave at Vaphio in the south of Greece, again evidential of the wide diffusion of the Cretan and his finely developed artistic ideals. We know, too, that this transplanted culture on the mainland with its main centres at Tiryns and Mycenae, was at the height of its glory when Knossos and Phaestos were declining.

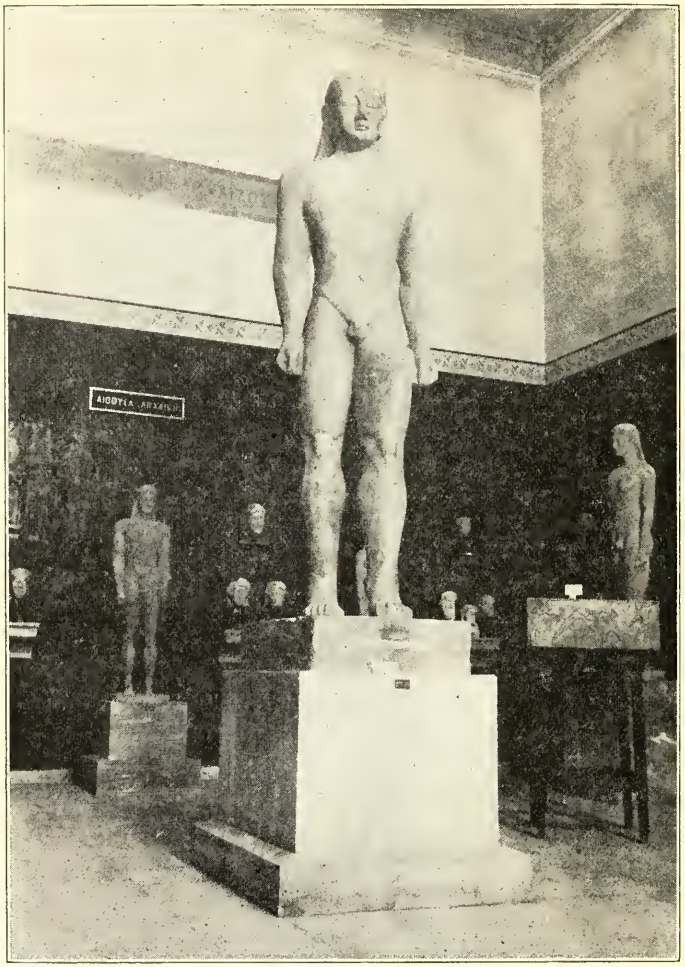


Design of the Vaphio gold cups. Copied by A. S. Riggs from drawing in the catalogue of the Mycenean collection of the National Museum, Athens.

Our knowledge of all of this has come out of the patient and studious effort of the excavator, whom Baikie has called in effect the re-creator of antiquity by clothing its dry bones with flesh and then breathing life into its dusty nostrils. The archaeologist, moreover, brings to bear upon his simplest discoveries the wealth of knowledge piled up by his fellow scholars, so that no discovery is complete in itself.

For the layman who has no first-hand knowledge of Greece, there is, unfortunately, no good short cut to a general comprehension of the combined scene and story. In even the best of the technical publications and textbooks the complications are so great as to leave the general reader a little confused by the detail, while the inevitable difficulties imposed by the Greek alphabet make quick understanding of the linguistic terms impossible. The literary sources of the classics, admirable though available translations

are, present similar difficulties, and the haze of glory that has been cast around everything Hellenic since books have been written is a further obfuscation. Notwithstanding all this, if we remember that



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Archaic figures called Kuroi representative of Greek Youth.

Greece was in early times a melting-pot in which the northern invaders simmered among Cretan, Cycladic and Thessalian influences until the Hellenic structure resulted, we can fall back upon archaeology for the rest.

If it perhaps seems that I have laid undue influence upon prehistory and the formative period of Greek culture, reflection will show that everything to follow that epoch was merely elaboration. We are much more interested today in seeing the first clumsy little locomotive, and in learning how and why steam came into practical use as a servant of man, than we are in studying the details of a vast turbine a thousand times as powerful as the baby engine. The things Greece settled for all time grew directly out of those curiously complex beginnings. Homer as an epic poet, the great dramatic poets, the philosophers and historians, Ictinus and his fellow architects, Phidias and the noble array of sculptors; Leonidas and his heroic three hundred at Thermopylae; Solon and Pisistratus and Periander, different in ideals as men could be—what are they all but expressions of the soul that was crystallizing in those formative centuries?

Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931

View over the ruins of the Altis or Sacred Place at Olympia

It is necessary only to journey around the Peloponnesus today to see the evidences as archaeology has dug them up out of a past inhumed in tradition as well as in debris. Land at little Patras, and go down thence to the whispering, fragrant pines above the Alpheus at Olympia. There among the ruins of the Altis, or Sacred Place, still many of them jumbled and unplaced, where nothing has as yet been restored, stalk the brave ghosts of the athletes—and the one

daring girl!—who made the name of the Games more immortal than the very gods. "The Peace of God," so the classics tell us, brought together representatives of all the Greek tribes here for a time every four years during a period of more than a millenium. And today the peace of the gods is still the presiding genius of those majestic temple bases and fallen drums. Olympia gives me more and deeper joy, more sense of the closeness with which man can approach his gods, than any Christian church or any other monument in the world. The camera cannot by any means capture the ineluctable magic of this place where all is dead but life! Great pines grow up among the stones and deserted foundations. The wild olive of the crowns for which the victors strove so mightily, gushes up from burnt soil

Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931

The Heraion, or Temple of Hera, at Olympia, provides the connective Link architecturally between wooden and stone construction.

with the effervescence of living water. Over to one side the crumbling remains of the Heraion give the acute student the "missing link" between wooden and stone architecture, and down on another somewhere among the tumbled heaps of stone beside the structure used as a mediaeval church, one may pick up chips of marble in the studios of Praxiteles, and return to the little Museum to see the great Hermes again.

Far to the south, a day's journey if one take the slow and deadly local train to Tripolis and then a motor for many a rocky,

dusty mile, lies the uninteresting little modern city of Sparta, with Mistra the mediaeval on its craggy hill nearby. Westward again, one more by a slow train through torrid heat and under a sky so cerulean no painter's brush has ever caught its hue, Nauplia nestles in the dimple of a cliff that changed its mind before it quite reached the water, and left a tiny shelf on which the town might crouch. And then motors, dust, the eternal hills, a burnt-up landscape which fills one with astonishment that any race, however stalwart, can wring a living from such soil. Beyond the twisty road, hidden at first among the embaying mountains of grim, cold, grey rocks as wild and stubbly with scrub growth as any northern

Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931 *All rights reserved*

The Labyrinth at Epidaurus

scene, lie the silent foci of those early days when Greece was a-borning—Tiryns, Asine, Mycenae.

Here Schliemann and his successors, ending with the Crown Prince of Sweden, have torn away the shroud of time. Cyclopean walls of rocks so huge some of them weigh about ten tons apiece rise on defiant eminences. Foundations and walls of palaces, tombs of both the pit and beehive types, carefully constructed secret galleries and acqueducts, gates and bastions are all that remain *in situ*. In the days of the Mycenean finds, archaeology did not leave in place that which could be taken away, and the treasures of gold, of wall-paintings, of bronze and jewelry have been scattered the

world over. The Metropolitan Museum in New York has one of the finest examples in existence of a Late Minoan wall-painting. But the real wonder of these melancholy sites inheres in something man has never seen, not in their looted treasures. How could communities so relatively insignificant in size be so great of soul as to dominate their world for even a single chapter of its long and turgid story? What quality of mind had these men to make them princes among their kind? May not the poets be perhaps right

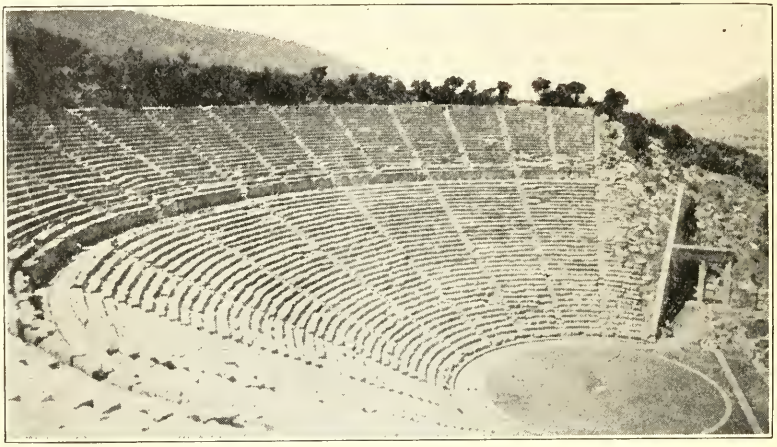


Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931

The Theater at Epidaurus.

after all in their tales of the Heroic Age, when the gods walked the earth and bred something of their own divine ichor into the ravished daughters of men? Or was it Greece herself that refined and subdued, sublimated and purged body and soul until naught was left but the fibres that have left their stamp on time itself?

How different placid Epidaurus, slumbering in the sun as sweetly as a child! Glide in your miracle-working modern motor squarely up to the orchestra of the vast theatre hewn from the hillside. Cast your voice from stage to topmost row of well-preserved seats without effort. Climb the innumerable rows until at last you stand on the height, and gaze off over the rolling nearby plain and over the range upon range of the Argolid hills. Small wonder Æsculapius chose this halcyon spot for the first health resort in the world. And small wonder, too, as a careful study of

both literary records and inscriptions has revealed, the institution grew and grew until its fame spread beyond Greece and drew the neurotic, the really ill, and the student from distant shores. Not long ago a manuscript came to my desk which repre-

Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931

The Temple of Apollo, the plain, and the fortifications of Acrocorinth on the hilltop above ancient Dorian Corinth.

sented a very scholarly reading of many of these Epidaurian inscriptions, and gave a detailed account of some of the cures practised, the fees exacted, the incredible population of the sanitarium in its heyday, and the gradual evolution of a system of semi-quackery side by side with the ethic the Father of Medicine gave the world immortally. Alas! I could not publish it because it was too scholarly, too involved and detailed a bit of research to mean much except to the classicist. But as I pored over the ruins and ate my luncheon under the trees near the stage of the theatre, among the inquisitive and hungry goats and chickens and turkeys of the caretaker, it recreated the deserted resort and its gossipping, complaining, dose-taking patrons against the background of the great god and his probably professionally solemn assistants. Farther afield among the sprawling remains of the settlement, which extend over a vast acreage of undulating plain, I stumbled upon what is probably the first Little Theatre in the world: a tiny Roman theatre as securely snuggled within the shell of an older Greek

structure as an hermit crab is tucked away in his protecting shell. Straight away from it one looks across the fragments of Main Street and Æsculapium and scores of buildings of various sorts, now barely knee-high, to the majestic tiers of seats of the ancient

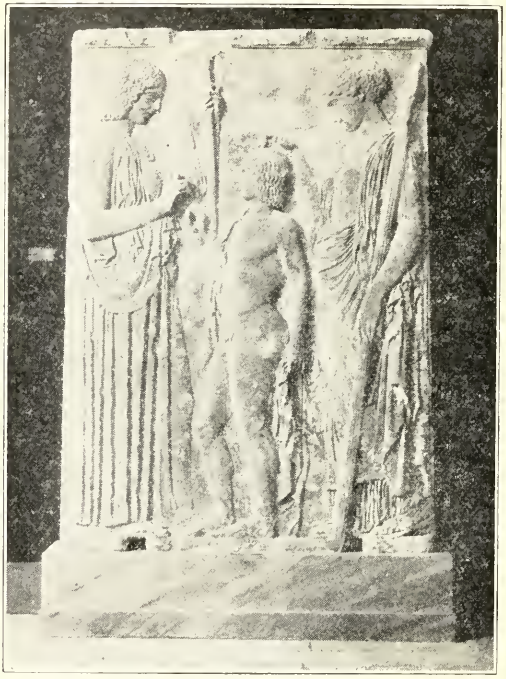


Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931 *All rights reserved*

The Famous Relief of Demeter Triptolemus and Korè (Persephone) found at Eleusis in 1859.

Theatre. Here a balance may be struck. The Greeks came to these granite hills and remained. Rome came, paused, and vanished. The one made a contribution of ethics, of architecture, of philosophy, of science we still recognize and value. The other brought a forced peace, reared a few bricks and passed on. Archaeology seeks only truth, and if, as here at Epidaurus, it seem ruthless, it is none the less of value.

Just around the corner of the Peloponnesus to the north, faintly shimmering in the dust of a choking plain at the foot of a lofty and precipitous hill, lies little more than the memory of Dorian

Corinth, mother of Sicilian Syracuse, metropolis and merchant for centuries of keen and active living. I have forgotten the tutelary deity of this mighty rival of Athens, but if the gods reward or punish according as they are worshipped, certainly Corinth must have overlooked or disregarded the chthonian gods, for no less than twenty-eight times has the grim "earth-shaker" ravaged the broad plain sweeping back toward the hills. Here though archaeology has uncovered much and supplied many lacunae left by the written records, the greatest interest is not strictly Greek but Roman as well. Professor Shear has gleaned from the North Cemetery not only the history of Corinthian art and commerce during practically its entire life, but has also given us a vivid picture of the later Roman city and its culture.

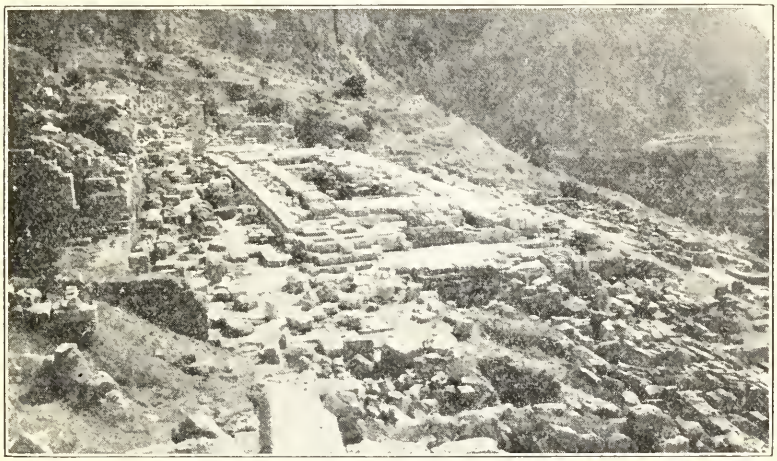


Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931

The heart of ancient Delphi, with the Temple foundations in the center. The Stadium and Theatre are above at the left, outside the view, and the Castalian Spring is hidden in the gorge in the background, center, beyond the shoulder of the hill.

Eleusis of the Mysteries, about half way between Corinth and Athens, weaves an enchantment essentially different and its own by keeping silent and leaving us to futile speculation regarding the nature of the solemn rites which gave it its lasting fame—rites which, according to Isocrates, gave "those who have participated in the mysteries sweeter hopes about death and about the whole of life." What could the Mysteries have been, and will Professor Kourou-

niotis, who is continuing the excavations and restorations for the Greek Government with American funds, eventually be able to give us some lucid explanation? Last summer he would not so much as admit he had an idea, though I questioned him closely. But within the rocky precincts of the so-called Temple of Hades are two objects I photographed which undoubtedly have some bearing on the rites. According to the caretaker they are the "wells" of Persephone. Into the one she disappeared during the ceremony of the fall, and from the other she reappeared in the spring to bring

Photo by A. S. Riggs, 1931 *All rights reserved*

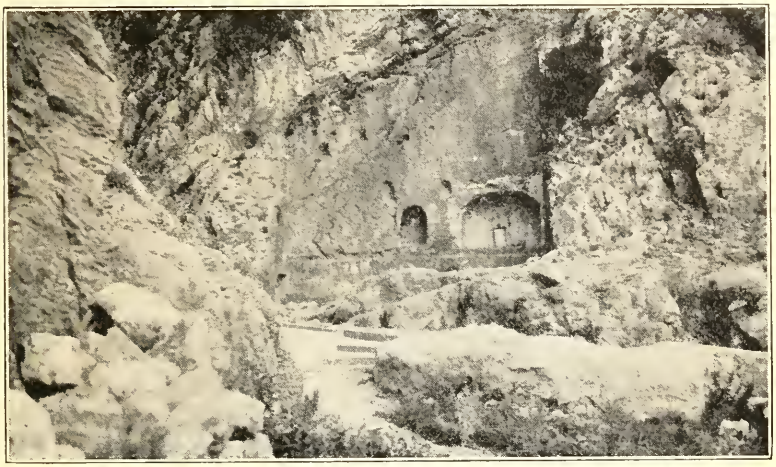
Where popular tradition says the Pythoness breathed the fumes and received the oracle in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

The supposed well or hole in the precincts of Pluto at Eleusis into which Persephone disappeared in the full (October) during the Eleusinian Mysteries.

the world again into blossom and fruitage. Nine days those ancient mysteries lasted: the length of lovely Demeter's wanderings. In this less reverent age we who move along the dusty highroad that almost coincides with the ancient Sacred Way from Athens to Eleusis go in motors instead of afoot, and we do not start before the dawn, wreathed with myrtle and bearing torches even if we go in some "month of flowers." Little remains of the tombs and shrines that once lined the road the pilgrims followed, but he who has Greece in his soul can still see and feel the crowds watch-

ing as the procession of youths and officials, priests and "mystae" winds slowly along through Athena's grey-green olives, up the long slopes of pine-clad Ægaleus, and through the pass toward the violet sea.

Delphi the marvelous glimmers high on the split side of Parnassus, before it a sweeping panorama of unequalled magnificence over misty mountain ranges and valleys and distant ultramarine Ægean. Crowded amazingly with everything the lover of Greek archaeology reveres; focus still of a district where the shepherds celebrate strange rites at night and sing songs of long vanished centuries, it is a beautiful shell, but it has none of the subtle per-



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The famed Castalian Spring among the "Shining Rocks" at Delphi.

fume which makes Olympia fragrant and Epidaurus stimulating, Argos melancholy and Asine enigmatic. The Castalian spring, alas! is all but dry today, a mere trickle of a stream flowing through a conduit, and the temple of Apollo reduced by earthquake and man to a mere foundation only. In the midst of ruin and desolation, though, archaeology has proved its magic. The beautifully restored Treasury of the Athenians makes the most soul-stirring ruin in the sacred precincts. Archaeology in the persons of Foucart, Homolle and their successors and collaborators for years, has developed another marvel here. Monsieur Charles Picard, in his *Sculpture*

Grecque a Delphes points out that "in a simple promenade through the halls of the Delphi Museum one may have a precise and sufficiently comprehensive view of the evolution of Greek art: this is indeed the privilege of Delphi, that practically all phases and almost all aspects of its productions are here represented, very often by capital pieces."

Though the French work has been systematic and exceedingly thorough, there remains the fascinating unsolved mystery of the famous Oracle. Who can say where was the adyton of the temple, and where the possibly sulphurous grotto above which the pythoness uttered those ravings a clever and highly sophisticated priesthood put into hexameters at a price for whomsoever would, and had the necessary wealth? The gaping hole in the temple foundations shown by the modern guides as the sacred spot is sheer imposture without a shred of proof, and thus far not a syllable of any sort has been found on stela or temple to indicate where the mysterious cavern may have been. Has destruction wrought so ill that nothing will ever solve the mystery, or may we hope that someday, perhaps at Delphi, possibly in some remote ruin not now suspected to have any connection with the shrine of Apollo, the excavator will astonishingly present us with the solution?

Athena's "city of light," the "city of the violet crown," is today the point to which all inquiry, all visits, all research eventually returns, for Athens is still, as she has been since she took the leadership against the Persians more than two millenia ago, the archetype of Hellenic spirit and achievements. Magnificently crowned by her Acropolis, and jeweled with the peaks of many another hill, she is in even the commonplace life of today a city to stir the soul. With the archaeologists at work about her feet delving further and further into her past greatness, one feels as he gazes down at some new excavation or studies reverently in one of her many museums that after all it is science which has brought the gods closest to man.

GALATEA COMES ALIVE

BY HELENA CARUS

THE Greeks had many kinds of divine beings, divinities as diverse as the strata of development among the people themselves, for the Greeks of the fifth century in the various cities and countrysides numbered among themselves men as civilized as we can ever hope to be, and men as primitive as any living tribe engrossing our anthropologists. We are apt to forget the difference between the Athenian of that time and the Thessalian or the Arcadian; and the Athenian cherished in his tolerant pantheon the divinities of every Greek, later even welcoming those of barbarians.

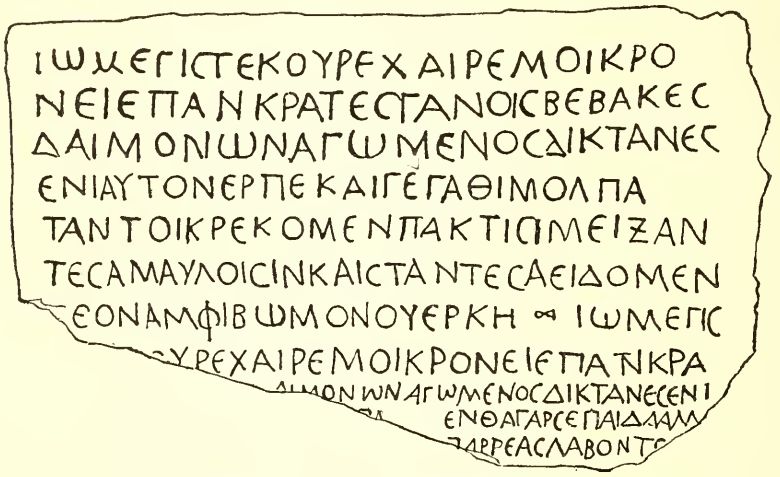
How diverse are the aspects of one and the same Protean God! The Apollo Augieus who guarded Athenian doorways was more related to the Herms who guarded the fields than to his own completely divinized, intellectualized aspect as the Pythian. Those Herms are hard to vizualize as the same god shown us by Praxiteles at Olympia. Zeus Ktesios who guarded storerooms, and Zeus Meilichios, the huge snake upreared, are startlingly unlike Phidias' great father of gods and men. During those few centuries wherein the Mycenaean culture was slowly assimilated to that of the Dorian invaders, every tribe in the hilly land was more or less isolated; more or less independently developing its individual rites, sanctities and gods. When the local games at Olympia, Corinth, and Delphi grew to be the vast invited concourses we know from the historians, each tribe added its facet of color and feeling to the gods which were slowly crystallizing into the twelve of Olympus. Poets, sculptors, and those barely recorded priestly dynasties at Olympia, Delphi, and Eleusis were the crystallizing media which gradually reduced the Olympians to *objects d'art,* but, in the fourth and fifth centuries, that moment of Greek flowering, every god and hero in the great assembly of divine beings scintilated with colors

and attributes as different as the many rituals which had gone into their making, and each god and hero lived for the Hellenic world more vividly than we can imagine any god or gods.

For the Greek lived his religion, kept it a vital part of his being by "dancing out the mysteries."

* * * *

To come upon the records of the ritual dance is to be startled out of that statuesque concept of the Greeks we have all gathered from reading the usual Homer, Plutarch and Xenophon, and from imbibing the traditions of the Renaissance. Even those who have read much deeper and have noticed mysterious references in Euripedes, Plato and the pedestrian Pausanias, would very likely be startled by the experience of finding these records assembled and interpreted by certain archaeological discoveries, certain unmistakably authentic inscriptions.



Fragment of Hymn found in Crete.

How startling is this experience is recorded by the very scholar whose study of Greek religion—*Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion,* J. E. Harrison, Cambridge—is the usual introduction of students to the subject. In a latter book, *Themis,* which published the finding of an inscribed stone in Crete which threw illuminating gleams into every obscure corner of her research, Miss Harrison's excitement sympathetically excites the reader and sets him to a revisualization of his individual concept of the Greeks, a re-

alization so inspiring that the experience cries aloud to be shared. In this inscription are evidentally recorded the accompanying words of a ritual dance. They are translated as follows:

> "Io, Kouros most Great, I give thee hail, Kronian, Lord of all that is wet and gleaming, thou art come at the head of thy Daimones. To Dikte for the Year, O, march, and rejoice in the dance and song,
>
> That we make to thee with harps and pipes mingled together, and sing as we come to a stand at thy well-fenced altar.
>
> Io, etc.
>
> For here the shielded Nurturers took thee, a child immortal, from Rhea, and with noise of beating feet hid thee away.
>
> Io, etc.
>
> .....
>
> ..... of fair dawn?
>
> Io, etc.
>
> And the Horai began to be fruitful year by year (?) and Dike to possess mankind, and all wild living things were held about by wealth-loving Peace.
>
> Io, etc.
>
> To us also leap for full jars, and leap for fleecy flocks, and leap for fields of fruit, and for hives to bring increase.
>
> Io, etc.
>
> Leap for our Cities, and leap for our sea-borne ships, and leap for our young citizens and for good Themis."[1]

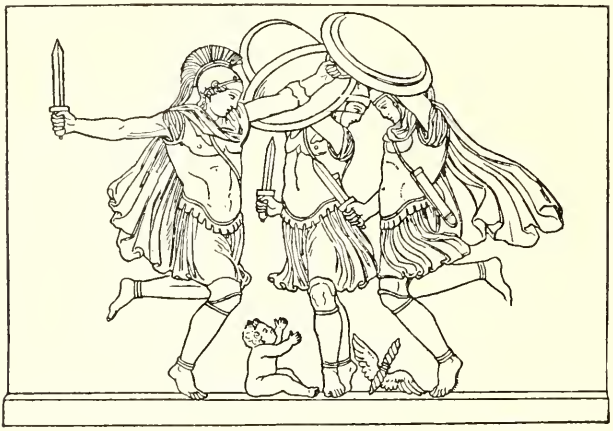
We call upon the god, Zeus, the young-man-initiate, to be one with us in the dance with which we arouse the fertility of spring. Zeus, the young-man-initiate, has been thrust forward, has been conceived, has been created, out of our collective emotion in this dance wherewith our beating feet have aroused the earth to her spring budding. Zeus, the young-man-initiate of the tribe, is very real to us, is very alive to us, because we have been one with him, he is one with us in this exciting, necessary performance without which the earth cannot bloom, cannot give grain and fruit. Most important of all, it is not the old citizens who must perform this serv-

[1]The above translation is quoted and the illustrations in this article are reproduced from Jane Ellen Harrison, *Themis. A Study of the Social Origin of Greek Religion?* by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

ice, it is the young-men-initiate of the tribe in the full vigor of their unspent, newly recognized manhood.

This Cretan inscription throws light upon the Thesmophoria at Athens—that woman's seed-time festival which appears to have been universal from Thrace to Cape Malea with but slight variations. Perhaps a composite picture would be forgiven a quite unscholarly mind.

At the new moon of the autumn seed time, the women, mothers



Dance of the Initiates

and maidens, left their homes and lived for some days in leafy booths set up about the fields. Let us hope they left full larders for men and children—though perhaps they often failed in this, making explainable the masculine resentment mirrored in Aristophanes' speech: "They keep the Thesmophoria as they always used to do"—these conservative women of the dawn of the 4th century.

These women sat for a time—in some places a trying, long ordeal, upon the bare earth, beating with their hands the broken clods and mourning with dirges the death of vegetation.

Is it not easy to visualize the projection out of their emotion of Demeter, disconsolate, mourning her daughter Persephone?

Then the women aroused themselves and prepared the basket of seeds—(Thesmophoria—basket carrying). Into the small cups of the clustered baskets went the barley, wheat, lentils, peas and onions of the frugal dietary; into the center basket went the phalli of paste; and upon the head of the leader or priestess, who tra-

versed without fail each family's holdings, the basket was carried about the fields. Following her came all the women and maidens, carrying magic things, everything imaginable of magic fertilizing power. Women carried their husbands' swords and spears, the spearheads thrust symbollically deep into the fertile fir cone, which two later became Dionysos's thyrsus. Maidens carried leafy branches, evergreens of unfailing foliage, and beat with those symbols their dancing summons upon the turned furrows.

At some moment during the proceedings the women bathed in the nearby sea or nearer river, each carrying with her a yearling pig. Then these "pigs of purification" were slain and left to rot in chasms ("pots in the earth," *megara*) and the remains of last years pigs were retrieved and strewn for magic fertilizer upon the fields or upon the seeds.

These are the swine engulfed when the god Hades rode down the chasm with ravished Persephone in his arms.

In no place did this seed-time magic entirely lose its memory of early moon-worship. The women would march three by three, the field-altars would sometimes be in threes; even at Eleusis, where the mysteries underwent many mutations and almost forgot their origin, Hekate, the three-faced moon, is the friend and consoler of her supplanting derivative, the beneficent mother Demeter.

Out of this yearly performance of intense participation arose Demeter; and at Eleusis, Demeter with her daughter, queen of that underworld where seeds germinate and the dead go to perform their fertilizing functions, and with that protégé of the two goddesses, the young Dionysos, formed the sacred three around whom the mysteries developed into which every Athenian was initiated; that is: made to enact and participate, to dance out the symbolic rites of the production of the food which, in this way, became food for his spirit as well as for his body.

It seems as though the Olympic festival, known to us general readers as athletic contests only, exhibits the most amazing and inspiring aspects of all other rites under this new light from Crete.

The tradition of the founding and refounding of these games runs something like this:

Herakles founded the footrace. Was this Herakles, the hero, the god, or was he the Cretan Daktyl or initiated-young-man? He came to Olympia with his companions, the other Daktyls—and raced

with them in the ancient holy place where a wooden-pillared, sun-dried-brick temple to Hera nestled under the mountain of the local initiations. A dream instructed Herakles to crown the victor with the leaves of a certain wild olive-tree to be designated to him by its festoons of spiderwebs and dew. Everywhere in that region grew the wild olive; they had so plentiful a supply that the companions slept on heaps of the green branches. The gray olive is everywhere reminiscent of the moon, the moon's own tree, drawn by the moon out of her other self the earth; but an olive-tree hung with spider webs, the moon's veils, and gleaming with dew, the moon's moisture, was doubly, triply associated with the moon. Perhaps the goddess whose temple stood there, archaeologists think, already in 1000 or 900 B. C., and who later was known as Hera, wife of the triumphant patriarchal Zeus, perhaps that goddess was originally the Moon.

Then came Pelops to Olympia, whose contest for the crown and the bride is told by Pindar in his First Olympian Ode.

"When toward the fair flowering of his growing age
The dawn began to shade his darkening cheek,
Pelops turned his thoughts to a marriage that lay ready for him,
To win from her father of Pisa famed Hippodamia.
He came near to the hoary sea, alone in the darkness,
And cried aloud to the Lord of the Trident in the low thundering waves.
And he appeared to him, close at his foot.
And Pelops spoke to him: "Come, O Poseidon,
If the kindly gifts of the Cyprian in any wise find favor with thee,
Do thou trammel the bronze spear of Oinomaos,
Speed me on swiftest chariot to Elis
And bring victory to my embrace.
For thirteen men that sued for her he hath overthrown,
In putting off the marriage of his daughter."

Oinomaos was king of Pisa by power of his prowess. He had doubtless won a bride and thereby become king in his youth. Now in their turn came suitors to contest for his daughter. Thirteen men had taken famed Hippodamia in their chariots, to escape the king to Elis. But he always overtook them, thrust his spear into the back of the contestant, and returned with his daughter to his house. These thirteen must be the thirteen lunar months which do not fit the solar year. Pelops bribed Myrtillos, the charioteer of the king, with the promise of a night with the bride, and he, therefore, with-

drew the pins from the axles of Oinomaos' chariot, who in pursuit was spilled out upon the rough road and killed by Pelops. Later Pelops set his six sons by this marriage in turn to race for the kingdom.

Now Hippodamia, the horse-rider, appears to have been the moon, and Pelops the charioteer, the sun. At some time before the Olympic records begin, the solar year of thirteen months and the marriage of sun and moon was commemorated at Olympia at the moment of the coinciding of those two periods; that is the explanation of the four year period of the festival. The games were held at alternating periods of forty-nine and fifty lunar months, falling one time two weeks before and the next time two weeks after the older festival to Hera, the games of the women (immovably fixed) at the full moon.

Marriage of Moon and Sun with dancing Initiate

Every four years a college of sixteen women of Elis met to weave a new robe for Hera, and then, at its dedication, held a race of the maidens to choose out the bride of that period.

When Zeus, representing patriarchy and the solar year, came to be almost supreme at Olympia, the priesthood, with characteristic tact, set his festival one time before, the next time just after the older festival.

It is traditional that at the beginning the men's games consisted of naught but the footrace to choose out the "hero." The other contests were added little by little during several centuries. Even after the other contests became so very spectacular, the winner of the footrace was always the one who gave his name to the Olympiad

and who was united in marriage to the winner of the race of the maidens. Sir James Fraser is the authority for this mystic marriage, but whether it was carried out in historic times seems not to be recorded.

Now the program of the men's games at Olympia followed this order. Sacrifice and dance at dawn of the first day, then the foot-race to choose out the hero, the representative of the divine force for the period of the four year Olympiad; afterwards came the other contests, and last of all, the splendid procession led by the leaf-decked hero to make sacrifice at all the altars. Is it not easy to put into the mouths of the young men who danced at the moment of sacrifice on that first morning the words of the ritual song found inscribed on the stone at Paleokastro in Crete? And do not those words throw illuminating gleams upon the sanctity accorded the Olympic winner, who returned to his city to be acclaimed for the rest of his life, for whom his fellow citizens tore a breach in their walls, leading him into his city in a chariot behind four white horses like the sun-god whose representative he was?

* * * *

They are thrilling concepts, these realities of the Greek religious life. In the light of such discoveries as the Cretan inscription it seems easier to understand that ascent in a few centuries from primitive life to the magnificent flowering which must astound men as long as they can be aware at all.

Can we visualize the concepts of those Greeks? We who have so many dry scientific factual concepts, can we understand the feelings of men who participated actively and eloquently by dance and song in the awakening of spring, in the burial of seed time, in the marriage of Sun and Moon? The mystic rituals enacted by some of our contemporaries, though directly inherited from these same Greeks, have been so devitalized by the attrition of centuries of theological revision that they do not appear to react so powerfully upon their participants as to bring about any flowering of artistic or intellectual genius. Little by little all ritual but the palest other-worldliness has been edited out of catholic practice. Is it by participation in earthly, healthy Sun and Moon concepts that we can best preserve vitality?

It has been the enthusiastic opinion of many thinkers, this idea that by close contact with earth, with primitive life-forces, we re-

new vitality and refresh spent strength. From the old legend of the giant Anteus whom Herakles could only conquer by lifting high in the air since contact with his mother, the earth, ever renewed his strength, through a succession of Greek sages and philosophers down to our strange Rousseau and his romantic followers; Wordworthian nature-lovers, down to the dimly visioning half-conscious Tolstoi, this feeling for the Earth has sung itself with every possible modulation. Now sociologists, anthropologists and even biologists are putting good reasons behind the intuitions of poets and philsophers, till we come to moderns with their seemingly incontrovertible theses of participation with the powers of nature.

For contemporary thinkers are persuading us along that path. Havelock Ellis with his *Dance of Life* means just this mystic participation with our world which the Greeks practiced and induced in their ritual dances. Aldous Huxley, in his essay "One God or Many" calls upon us for our vitality's sake to participate with the diversity of our world by means of Dionysiac and Corybantic excitement. Friederich Nietzsche, whose brilliant intuition first laid out the tracks of discovery as to the relation of the Dionysiac mysteries to the pinnacle of Attic tragedy, preserved even over the threshold of his madness the magnificent inspiration of his mystic participation with earth in her most sublime aspect, which had been his experience while striding through the high Engadine and shouting aloud the great strophes of his third book of *Zarathustra*.

What were these Dionysiac mysteries which culminated in Orphism and crystallized in Euripedes to flicker and all but die through nineteen centuries of theology?

Dionysos came late; no one knows exactly from where. Perhaps he came from Thrace, perhaps from Asia, perhaps from Crete, the birthplace of mysteries, the home of priests who were summoned to purify cities, endangered as Athens had been through lax customs. Perhaps the word Dionysos means "Zeus, young-man," and he is this young Zeus called upon by the Cretans to "come, Lord of all that is wet and gleaming!"

The rites of Dionysos were rites of "becoming one with the God." You participated in a mystic madness and you felt yourself enriched afterwards.

Before the coming of the vine from Asia, Dionysos' followers chewed ivy leaves, as did the Pythian prophetess, to induce this

mystic madness of "losing yourself to enrich yourself." Wine, mildly alcoholic, brought the abstemious Greeks just enough intoxication to fulfill the demands of this madness. All Dionysiac rites were preformed at night, by gleaming shadowing torchlight, and cymbals, dance and prayer were condusive to the overstepping of mental dimensions. You danced in the darkness, a solemn pacing around alone or in companies, you sang the calling songs, you drank the juice of the sacred vine, soon you saw satyrs and panni and maenads among the people, you followed the young men who carried the image of the God, the ivy-decked log, to the music of the Dithyrambos from the sanctuary "in the Marshes" to the great theatre under the Acropolis where tomorrow and the following days the contesting poets would present their new tragedies. You

The shielded Nurturers.

spent the whole night dancing in the sacred madness of participation with that God who was one moment a man, the next a tree, the next a bull or goat, the next a god standing calm-bearded in divine fire.

Every year in the spring time when violets and pansies bedeckt fair Athens and nestled on the very rocks of the citadel, you re-

lived the calling of Dionysos, you participated in his madness, you danced and sang the Dithyrambos. You could not but go next day to whatever work was yours, sublime or humble, without some new aspiration toward perfection. If you were not Phidias perhaps you were a potter.

In 1850 the Athenians still collected yearly in the marshes on the day of the Dionysos festival for a day and night of picnicking and dancing. The laying aside of the national costume had more to do with the giving up of this ancient custom than any fulminations of the clergy, thought Sir Thomas Wise, British ambassador, who recorded the practice.

Perhaps if we lived in such a land, where the atmosphere was deepened with Mediterranian purple, red and gold, the tillable earth tended by centuries of religious magic-working love and hunger, with an Acropolis towering over us upon which we had expended not only heart's blood in siege and evacuation but nearly every penny of our material resources afterwards; perhaps then we could respond fully, utterly, when some Pindar called us with his Dithyrambos:

"Look upon the dance, Olympians,
Send us the grace of victory, ye gods,
Who come to the heart of our city
Where many feet are treading and incense steams:
In sacred Athens come to the market place
By every art enriched and of blessed name.
Take your portion of garlands pansy-twined,
Libations poured from the culling of spring,
And look upon me as, starting from Zeus,
I set forth upon my song with rejoicing.

Come hither to the god with ivy bound;
Bromios we mortals name Him and Him of the mighty Voice.
He comes to dance and sing,
The child of a father most high and a woman of Cadmus' race.
The clear signs of his fulfillment are not hidden,
Whensoever the chamber of the purple-robed Hours is opened

And nectarous flowers lead in the fragrant Spring.
Then, then, are flung over the immortal Earth
Lovely petals of pansies, and roses are amid our hair;
And voices of song are loud among the pipes,
And dancing-floors are loud with the calling
Of crownèd Semèlè."

COPAN, AN ANCIENT MAYA METROPOLIS

BY J. ERIC THOMPSON
Assistant Curator, Field Museum of Natural History

RUINED Maya cities are scattered in the forests and jungles of a wide area of Central America comprised within the States of Chiapas, Tabasco, Yucatan and the Territory of Quintana Roo in Mexico, the whole of British Honduras, the northern half of Guatemala and the western border of Honduras.

Copan, situated in the last named country, is one of the most important of these ruined cities, and must, at one time, have been the religious metropolis of the whole of the eastern part of the Maya area. Unlike most Maya cities, it is not buried deep in the forest, but is situated in a pleasant valley some two thousand feet above sea level, where the exuberant growth of the tropical forest has, to a certain extent, been held in check.

Few people outside the ranks of archaeologists have visited this site owing to its comparative remoteness, for a two days' ride on muleback is necessary to reach it.

Puerto Barrios on the north coast of Guatemala is the jumping-off place. This is a typical O'Henry banana port, for there are to be seen all the characters that pass and repass across the stage of his Central American yarns. One can recognize all the types—tropical tramps, pompous Latin American officials, revolutionary leaders resting between bouts, banana workers of every race and color, and the flotsam and jetsam of a port. The town is hot, dirty and roadless, and one is usually glad enough to get out of it at the earliest opportunity.

A railroad, running between Barrios and Guatemala city, carries us from the humid heat of the *Tierra caliente* or hot lands up into the cool mountainous climate of Guatemala city. For the first three hours the train passes an almost continuous series of banana

plantations owned by the ubiquitous United Fruit Company. One seems to be passing through an endless green-walled tunnel broken only by the occasional clearings, on which are situated the houses of the farm managers or laborers. One perspires, fans oneself with a paper, and wonders how there could possibly be so many banana trees in the world.

Just as one begins to believe that the banana farms will never end, the country suddenly changes, and the train is traversing a semi-desert country of grassless fields and stunted trees, liberally strewn with organ-pipe cactus.

About five hours after leaving Barrios we reach Zacapa, base for the mule trip to Copan. Here we spend the rest of the day bargaining for mules and envying our fellow passengers of the train, which is now climbing up into the cool air of the plateau country. Finally everything is arranged for an early start next morning. The muleteer has sworn by all his saints that the mules will be ready at 6:30 am., but, after many such trips in Central America, only a rank optimist would expect to get away at the hour fixed. The Latin American muleteer with his lithe build and flowing moustache seems to have inherited a little of the proud mien of the conquistadores, but the mules with their slow gait and mean stature have little in common with the horses of the conquest, to which "After God," to use his own expression, Cortez so frequently attributed his victories and escapes from defeat.

The trail stretches eastward across the cactus-studded plain for a few miles, and then starts its climb into the hills. It soon narrows to a boulder-strewn footpath which zigzags up the hills, descending frequently into valleys to cross dried watercourses, only to rise more steeply on the far side. Progress is slow; with halts to adjust cargo and other inevitable delays the pace is slowed down to less than three miles an hour. Riding thus in single file conversation is difficult, and the silence of our passage is broken only by the shouted curses of the multeer at the laggard mules and the metallic clang of ironshod hoof against rock. The country is without inhabitants, and life is represented solely by innumerable lizards that resentfully abandon their sun-baths on our approach, and myriads of crickets vibrating a hidden chorus.

As evening is approaching, we file into the little town of Jocotan conveniently situated halfway between Zacapa and Copan, and suf-

ficiently high up to insure a cool night. Jocotan, like every Central American settlement, sprawls around a large plaza, flanked on one side by the low long municipal court-house, on another by an equally squat and lengthy seventeenth century church.

In the days when Jocotan's church was built, the Spaniards were few and the hostile Indians around them many, and so it was built to serve the dual purpose of worship and defence. An outside staircase leads to an embattled roof. Thither, in times of danger, the little settlement could retire—the women and children to safety, the men to man the defences.

To-day there is no danger of Indian raids. The Indians are few in numbers and cowed in spirit. The staircase is slowly crumbling away, adding one more feature to a scene already pregnant with beauty. In the cool of the evening the plaza serves as the foreground for a restful picture with the whitewashed walls of its houses topped by weathered, red tiles, forming a contrast to the mountains behind with their earth colors broken by the dark greens of pine forest on the higher slopes. The rest of the canvas is covered with a cerulean blue that towards the west fades into the pale lemon of a cloudless sunset.

Hammocks are slung on the verandah of the little straw-thatched *posada*, while close at hand the mules seem contented with their vitaminless diet of dried cornstalks—all that is obtainable in this grassless land. A few people stroll slowly round the plaza, the men promenading in groups of threes and fours in one direction, the girls in the other. One or two guitars are half-heartedly strummed, but the sparse oil lamps in the houses are soon dimmed, and Jocotan relapses into silence. The peace of the sleeping town is broken only by the barking of dogs and the steady munching by our mules of the diminishing pile of cornstalks.

Next morning we are off as soon as coffee has been drunk and the inevitably broken girth or stirrup leather has been mended with string in the best Central American style. A mile or so beyond Jocotan, the trail enters another small town, complete with eighteenth century church decorated in a kind of local plateresque style. This is Camotan, which is to Jocotan as St. Paul is to Minneapolis. Jocotan means the place of the plums, Camotan the place of the sweet potatoes. Both are Aztec names dating from the conquest when Mexican mercenaries were employed by the Spaniards in the sub-

jection of this country. After Camotan the country becomes wilder and more mountainous. In many places the narrow trail clings to the mountainside, while, hundreds of feet below, torrential streams roar their protests at the boulders that impede their hurried rush to the sea. High up on the mountain slopes are little scattered settlements of the Chorti Indians, a branch of the Mayas who built the city of Copan some fifteen to twenty centuries ago. These modern Mayas are a humble people, who show little evidence of their noble descent. All the greatness of their ancestors is lost, even the knowledge of their past, and they are content to live in little communities of four or five huts and tend their maize and sugar-cane fields. These are situated high up the mountain sides, and are set at almost incredible steep angles. The Chortis encountered on the trail appear a timorous lot, either passing with downcast faces or, where this is possible, slipping off the trail till we have passed.

Soon we are in the sweet smelling pine forests. At the divide is a small pile of stones, surmounted by a cross and decorated with little bunches of flowers or bundles of pine needles. This is an Indian offering to the old Maya mountain god with a thin veneer of Christianity imparted by the cross. There is a freshness in the air like that of a new England spring morning, which even our weary mules appear to relish. For several hours more we ride round or across mountains until just before sunset we top yet one more small rise, and find ourselves looking down into the Copan Valley.

Three miles away the mass of the main group of ruins can be distinguished beyond the modern village of Copan, while a few feet away from us where we stand looking down into the valley, a solitary stela appears to be giving us a *bienvenida.*

It was customary at Copan, as in most Maya cities, to erect these stelae at fixed intervals of five, ten or twenty years. They are monolithic stone shafts, averaging about twelve feet in height, and almost invariably carved on the front with an elaborate figure, who probably represents the deity to whom the monument is dedicated. The remaining three sides are usually given up to hieroglyphic inscriptions that record the date of the monument's erection, the age of the moon at this date, information as to the movements of other planets, the names of the patron gods of the night and the month, and other ritualistic information not yet decipherable.

It has been claimed that this solitary stela on the lip of the valley above Copan formed with another monolith of the same type on the opposite, or east side of the valley, a giant line of sight, nearly five miles in length. This, it is claimed, the ancient Mayas used as a check on the length of the tropical year and to fix the date on which their fields were to be burnt off prior to sowing. The sun sets behind the western marker on April 12th during its passage northward, and this is about the date when the modern Mayas start to burn their fields. Nevertheless, definite evidence

Courtesy of Field Museum

A stela at Copan

that these two monuments served this purpose is lacking.

The main group of ruins, situated in the bottom of the valley on the banks of the Copan river, consists of a series of courts flanked by a bewildering array of pyramidal structures once crowned

with temples. Both pyramids and temples are faced with beautifully faced stone and adorned with numerous decorative motifs. Copan was at its height in the eighth century of our era, or, according to a different correlation of the Maya and Gregorian calendars, about the middle of the sixth century A. D. At that time with its gaily painted and carved temples perched on the tops of high pyramids with terraced sides and broad stairways, the city must have presented an overwhelmingly impressive spectacle. Copan was primarily a religious center.

The city must have witnessed many ceremonies of barbaric splendor. One pictures processions of priests bedecked with the sweeping emerald plumes of the quetzal bird, wending their way across the courts and up the steep stairways to the temples above. Probably prisoners were led up here to be sacrificed while the court below was crowded with breathless spectators. Direct evidence of this usage at Copan does not exist, but human sacrifice was of frequent occurence in later Maya cities of Yucatan, and there is evidence of the practice in other early cities of Guatemala that were contemporaries of Copan. In the more usual form of sacrifice the priest opened the breast of the victim with a sharp stone knife, and inserting his hand in the cavity, wrenched out the heart. The wretched individual, who was generally a prisoner of war, was held by four assistant priests so that the small of his back rested on a low convex stone. In other forms of human sacrifice the captive was shot with arrows.

Despite this somewhat gruesome custom, the Mayas had attained by the eighth century of our era a very high level of achievement, particularly in art and mathematics. Copan was in the van of this advance. Her artistic achievements are well exemplified by the magnificent carving of the personage on the face of the stela shown in the picture. The Maya artist was largely shackled by convention. His object was not mere portrayal, but rather the conveyance of religious symbolism by well stylized and conventionalized media intelligible to the layman. Portraiture was secondary and dependent on the prior fulfilment to the last detail of every symbolic feature. Once one realizes this subordination and the Maya artist's horror of space unfilled by decoration, one speedily appreciates that the best Maya art was incomparably superior to that of

Egypt at any time and to that of the rest of the contemporaneous world.

Copan, in addition to being a great artistic center, was in its heyday the intellectual leader among Maya cities. One might al-

Courtesy of Field Museum

The head and shoulders of the personage on a Copan stela.

most name it the Athens of the Maya confederation. Perhaps Copan's greatest intellectual achievement was the astronomical conference held here in A. D. 763. At this conference the length of the tropical year was fixed with such accuracy that, in computations over a period of four thousand years, the Mayas had an error of only one day. A truly remarkable performance when one considers that the Julian calendar, which was in use in this country until the seventeenth century, would have had an error of thirty days over the same period.

Copan was justly proud of this achievement, and commemorated it by carving on an altar bearing this date the portraits of a series of individuals who were in all probability the actual members of the astronomical conference. In the photograph four of these per-

sons are seen facing towards two glyphs which record the date 6 Caban 10 Mol. This was the basis for the new computations, and

Courtesy of Field Museum

Grotesque head on stone incense burner at Copan.

in the first of the two correlations mentioned, corresponds to July 1st 763 A.D.

One of the wonders of ancient Copan was the great hieroglyphic stairway. This consisted of a flight of some ninety steps leading up the face of a steep pyramid to a temple on the summit. Each step, which was thirty feet wide, was carved with hieroglyphs, and, at intervals, were set stone-sculptured individuals of heroic size. Each individual wears an elaborate head-dress surmounted by a mask representing a deity, and is richly clad in addition to displaying intricately carved jade jewels. Jade was the most treasured

possession of the Mayas. It was worn in a number of different ways, particularly as nose and ear ornaments, as inlays in the teeth, and in the form of elaborate breast ornaments. Indeed, in later times when gold was in use, it was considered less valuable than jade.

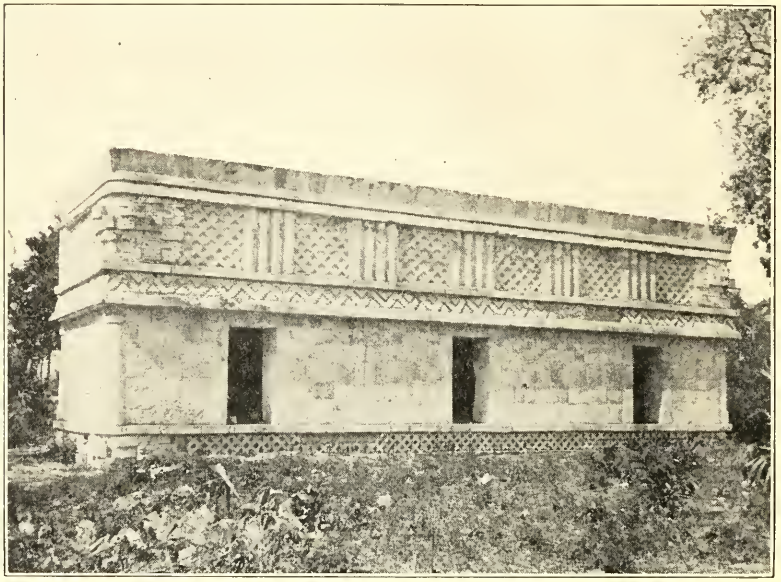
The ruins are profusely strewn with carved stelae and altars, no less than eighty of these having been discovered. Their carving must have been a tedious business as the Mayas possessed only

Courtesy of Field Museum

Interior of a typical Maya temple showing corbelled roof.

stone tools at this period. The background was laboriously pecked away with crude stone hammers until the design was left blocked out in rough relief. Then the face of the carving was smoothed off by abrasion with celts and sand. The monument was hauled to its

position on rollers, and then raised into position, probably with the aid of ropes passed over trunks in the manner of a primitive pulley. The whole community must have been pressed into service



Courtesy of Field Museum

A temple of late date in Yucatan.

when the construction of a pyramid, court or temple was undertaken. Perhaps these forced laborers would have worked with a better will had they realized that their work would still stand after more than a thousand seasons with their attendant floods and rapid changes of temperature.

In the middle of the ninth century this great era of activity came to an abrupt end. Within a period of some fifty years, construction ceased in every important city of the early period. In Copan and all the great centers of the lowlands of Guatemala it was never to be restarted, but in Yucatan a brilliant development was soon in swing, which continued until shortly before the coming of the Spaniards.

Many theories have been advanced to account for this collapse in the south. It has been suggested that the early cities were abandoned because of the impoverishment of the soil owing to the waste-

ful agricultural system of the Mayas. This was based on clearing and burning off large tracts of forest land, and employing the soil thus cleared for one, or at the most two, seasons before abandoning it, to permit of refertilization through fresh forest growth. Such an explanation is unsatisfactory for it does not account for the continued occupation of Yucatan, where the soil is considerably poorer than that of the southern area.

According to another explanation yellow fever swept off the population, but there is no real evidence that this disease was even known in the new world prior to its discovery by Columbus.

A third and quite plausible theory is that the Maya area was once drier than it is to-day, but a gradual increase of the annual rainfall eventually made agriculture so arduous for a people forced to fight back the onslaught of tropical forests with stone tools that the whole southern area was abandoned. In Yucatan, where the civilization continued, the rainfall was not so heavy and the forest growth consequently more checked. Indeed, at the present time the rainfall in Yucatan is much less than in the southern region.

It is also possible that there was a revolt among the workers against the virtual slavery imposed on them by the priesthood. The continual building and rebuilding of pyramids and temples must have entailed an extremely irksome form of forced labor for every man and woman in the community. This combined with resentment against new religious concepts imposed by the theocracy on the layman may have caused a revolt, which ended in the massacre or expulsion of the priesthood and other members of the aristocracy. With their death or departure building operations ceased, and the common people, uninterested in any branch of science, gradually slipped down the path of cultural degeneration until, kicked farther down by their Spanish conquerors, they have reached their present stage—pathetic inheritors of a civilization they rejected. After this very brief survey of Copan and its culture, it would be interesting to look a little more carefully into the religious concepts of this remarkable people to see if they carried into the realms of religion the same peculiar balance of progress and primitiveness that characterizes their material culture.

For information on the religion of the Mayas we can turn to three sources. First, we have the information handled down to us by the first Spaniards who came in contact with the Maya civil-

ization. Secondly, we have such information as we can deduce from the carved monuments and the three manuscripts of hieroglyphic writings that have survived. Lastly, we can go to the modern Mayas, descendants of the city builders and find how much of their old religion has survived four centuries of European contact.

Actually, the information that can be gleaned from all three sources is not very great. The early Spanish chroniclers with few exceptions were priests, who were so busy extirpating heathenism that they had little time or inclination to enquire closely into what the Mayas believed. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were not marked by the spirit of tolerance. Catholics were no worse than Protestants, but when one realizes that the Mayas were subjected to *Autos de fe*, and suffered death for relapsing into their old religion less than twenty years after the introduction of Christianity, one can not expect a sympathetic study of their religion from their inquisitors. As a matter of fact the best description of Maya religion has come to us through one of the most cruel and bigoted of the early evangelizers. Bishop Landa, the author of this treatise, was recalled to Spain because of his cruelty to the Indians, and furthermore in modern eyes he was guilty of an even more serious offence. He collected all the hieroglyphic writings he could lay his hands on, and burnt them as works of the devil—an irreparable loss to science as only three of these books have survived the holocaust. We regret having to acknowledge our indebtedness to such an individual, but without his writings we should know little indeed about Maya religion and ritual. Actually much that he wrote on this subject was probably supplied to him by a certain Gaspar Xiu, an early convert to Christianity of royal Maya descent and remarkable intelligence.

The information that can be gathered from the monuments and codices is scanty in view of the fact that so many of the hieroglyphs are still a sealed book to us, but it has been possible to correlate some of the information given by the Spanish writers with that yielded by the stelae and other inscriptions.

The ethnological information that can be gleaned from the modern Mayas is our one great hope of reconstructing the ancient religion. The modern Mayas, of whom there are at least a million, are nominally Christians; this is but a thin veneer; underneath they remain essentially pagan. To scrape away this veneer of

Christianity and reveal what it hides is the task that faces the modern ethnologist.

Frequently we find that the present day Mayas have welded Christianity on to their old religion to form a new polytheistic concept with the Christian God at the head of the pantheon. Beneath Him are a number of junior gods, whose numbers are recruited in about equal parts from the ranks of the old Maya gods and the more important saints of the Catholic church.

The ancient Maya religion seems to have been very largely based on nature worship. Maya economic life revolved around the success or failure of the crops, consequently we find personifications of the maize crop and those aspects of nature in closest contact with it. The most important deities to the Maya layman were earth gods, who by extension of their functions became also gods of rain, thunder and the winds.

The Mayas seem to have conceived these gods as being innumerable, but four of them were of paramount importance, and one of these four acted as chief god of the whole band. The big four, if one can apply this modern term to a group of Maya gods, were associated with the four world directions and four world colors, fundamental Indian concepts that are met with all over aboriginal America. These earth-rain gods are essentially benevolent, but if their dues of offerings are denied them they can be destructive, either by withholding the rains required by the crops, or causing destruction with storms and thunderbolts. They also ruled over the rivers and lakes.

In Guatemala these gods were known under various names. Among the Kekchi-Mayas they were, and are to this day, known as *Tzultacah,* which means "Mountain-Valley," a poetic way of expressing their ubiquity as earth gods. They were also addressed as "Our Grandfathers, our Grandmothers," the implication being, apparently, that they have existed since the creation of the world. They are of both sexes, and appear to change sex with consummate ease, for one moment a particular *Tzultacah* will be considered a male, another moment he will be spoken of as feminine. In Yucatan, where mountains are non-existent, they were known as *Chacob* or *Yumil Kaxob*—"The Thunders" or "The Lords of the Forest."

These earth-rain-fertility gods were and are, for they are still

worshipped in many parts of the Mayan area, the recipients of prayers and copal incense. They guard the crops from predatory animals and insects, send the rains when required, and, in their

Courtesy of Field Museum

Maya gods as depicted on Copan stelae.

1-2 The long-nosed earth and rain god.
3 The Moon deity.
4 The Sun god.
5 God C, the monkey-faced god.
6 The maize spirit.
7. The death god.

guise of earth gods, fatten the crops. According to legend they gave maize to man, smiting asunder with their thunderbolts the rock in which it was hidden. On the monuments they are shown with modified ophidian features, the snake being closely associated with rain and crops among the Mayas as among so many other Indian peoples. In Figure 6 is depicted a typical head of one of these fertility gods. The nose has been prolonged into a kind of proboscis, which is actually derived from the conventionalized upper jaw of a snake. In the drawing the rain god is emerging from the open jaws of a serpent's head. The similarity of the god's nose to the snake's upper jaw, which stretches upward immediately behind the god's head, is very apparent.

Frequently the earth and rain gods are represented as carrying stone axes over their shoulders. These are the thunderbolts they hurl to earth, indeed, the modern Mayas still believe that a house or tree struck by lightning has been hit by a stone axe thrown by one of the rain gods. They are also believed to carry calabashes of water, and drums. They bring the rains upon earth by pouring out a little water from the calabashes, and they make the thunder by beating on their drums.

In ancient times, apparently, they were believed to preside over one of the abodes of the dead, a paradise which, strangely enough, was largely if not entirely peopled by suicides. This was considered a pleasant land where crops were ever abundant, and people rested in the shade of the sacred ceiba tree (*Bombax ceiba*).

These fertility gods were the most important in the eyes of the Maya layman, whose life was bounded by his crops. Probably few peoples have such a love for the soil as that shown by the Mayas, both ancient and modern. Maya civilization, I repeat, was based on maize, and it was only meet that its most revered gods should be of the soil.

Of secondary importance from the layman's viewpoint were the sky gods. The sun and moon bulk largely in legend, but had little attention paid them by the peasant. The sun was believed to have been a great hunter during his abode on earth, the blowgun being his weapon. He wooed, and after many adventures won the moon, the inventress of weaving. The emblem of the sun is a St. Andrew's cross placed in a cartouche. The sun was seldom invoked in prayer, for it was believed that were he asked to shine down with more

warmth on the earth, he would not know when to stop, and a drought would ensue.

The sky god, *par excellence,* was known in Yucatan under the name of Itzamna, and was ranked as a creator god. He is invariably pictured on the monuments and manuscripts as an old man with toothless mouth and heavy Roman nose. The Mayas do not appear to have accorded him much worship either, for he was considered too remote to take much interest in the every day life of the common people. For that reason the earth gods were more popular with the rank and file, for although not so powerful as Itzamna, they were close at hand, and able to see with their own eyes what the people needed.

A good illustration of this belief, slightly metamorphized by Christianity, came to my notice in a small Maya village in southern British Honduras. This village of San Antonia was founded some forty years ago by immigrants from the village of San Luis in Guatemala. At first the crops were poor and disease rife. It was concluded that the reason of this was that Saint Louis, their patron saint in their old village, was too far away to see their troubles, for his statue had remained in San Luis when they migrated. An armed expedition to seize him was despatched. This burst into the village when everyone was sleeping, and the saint was successfully removed from the church and taken to San Antonio. Since his rape crops have been good, and the better times are attributed to his presence, for now he is on the spot, and well able to see that nature is functioning as it should. The sky gods were associated with astronomy, and were of more importance to the priests. There seems little doubt that there were two very different sets of religious ideas held by the laymen, on the one side, and the priests and nobility, on the other.

One of the most important rites in this esoteric cult of the priests was the worship of the planet Venus. This appears to have been a later concept evolved by the priesthood, and unsuccessfully foisted on the laymen. That the cult was of very great importance is shown by the large number of temples dedicated to its worship, but traces of it are very few among the modern Mayas, and legends clearly reveal that Venus as the morning star has usurped many of the functions of the earth-fertility gods. At the time of the conquest most of the old Maya nobility and priest class was wiped out, and their re-

ligious knowledge and science died with them. The Maya religion that has survived is that of the peasant, and as that body never seems to have taken kindly to the Venus worship, it is not surprising that few traces have survived.

The priest and nobility group were also in all probability responsible for the practice of human sacrifice, as such a concept is at variance with the essential friendliness of the earth gods. As I have already stated, there is a possibility that the fall of the Old Empire was due in part to a revolt of the peasants, and the foisting of these alien cults on the people, combined with the slavery involved in the building of pyramids and temples in large quantities, may have been important factors in the revolt.

Prayers of the ancient Mayas have not survived, but below is given a short prayer collected by me in southern British Honduras, and used by the modern Mayas in addressing the earth-rain gods in connection with the sowing of their crops. The prayer is simple, but probably does not differ greatly from the prayers that have been said every spring throughout the Maya area for the last three thousand years.

"O God, my grandfather, my grandmother, Lord Huitz-Hok, god of the hills and the plains, Lord Kuh, god of the maize lands, with all my heart, with all my soul I make this offering (copal incense) to you. Be patient with me in what I am about to do for the sake of God Almighty and the Blessed Virgin Mary. I pray you give me an abundant return for all the crops I have sown, for all the work I have done in my fields. Guard them for me, let nothing damage them. May I harvest from all that I have sown."

Some fifteen hundred years ago very similar prayers must have mingled with the fumes of the copal incense in the fields around Copan, while in the temples of the city the pomp and splendor of a developed ritualism made a strange contrast, but the sacerdotalism has disappeared, while the simple prayers have survived.

NICHIREN—PROPHETIC PANTHEIST

BY TERESINA ROWELL

A MAN who could denounce the extreme political and social disorder of his age and at the same time proclaim his country as ideally the spiritual paradise on earth must have united prophetic vision with mystical intuition to an unusual degree. In a union still less familiar among prophets this same man brought together the 'three times'—past as well as present and future—by finding the sources of his inspiration in a scriptural tradition with its roots in the distant past.[1] And since prophets have not been wont to concern themselves with metaphysical speculation, his unique place in the biography of prophesy is assured, in the third place, by his keen philosophical interest in the eternal reality which is timeless, deep underlying the changing ages of passing time.

Nichiren, the mediaeval Japanese Buddhist reformer, metaphysician, and mystic of whom we speak, is justly set in the ranks of the prophets, because of his reforming zeal and ardent concern for the future, inspired by that conviction which is the distinguishing mark of all prophesy—the conviction that the cosmos is working toward some ideal goal, and that he, the prophet, has a significant responsibility for the realization of that goal even in his time. In the light of this cosmic purpose the prophet criticizes his own age and points the way to what the future should be, so that on earth the next age shall be a closer approximation to the "golden age" and a step towards its ultimate realization.

The appearance of such a conviction in Buddhism is unex-

[1]Cf. Amos, a representative Hebrew prophet, whose authority is the direct inspiration of God: "Thus saith the Lord." He appeals to tradition only occasionally, and then not as authority but as the proof of Israel's debt to Jehovah. The rest of his verbs are almost entirely in the future.

pected. It is familiar in Judaism and Zoroastrianism,[2] for teleology is a natural and perhaps inevitable concomitant of their belief in a transcendent God outside of nature[3] who created the world and directs it toward the ultimate realization of His purposes in some "far-off divine event." But pantheism or any worship of a God *in* nature tends to emphasize mechanism, causality, the natural order of events, and repudiates teleology.[4]

How then may we account for Nichiren's unexampled combination of immanent theism with a pronounced doctrine of cosmic purpose? It is really much more than a 'combination'; it is a synthesis which cannot be understood apart from the Buddhist teachings which inspired his ethical conviction and supplied the basis for his metaphysics, nor apart from his time and his own temperament, which help to explain the gospel he developed out of scriptural teachings and the earnestness with which he applied that gospel to the problems of contemporary life.

There were problems to vex the wisest philosopher-king confusing thirteenth century Japan. The imperial regime had broken down, its divided remnants fought each other while the new feudal organization really ruled the country from the north; the civilian population besides enduring a civil war, suffered from fires and plagues and all sorts of natural and unnatural calamities, while the effeminate nobles sought escape from responsibility in the aestheticism of a degenerate court life and a ritualistic cult of Buddhism. The calamities instead of encouraging a hardy religious life among the people only fomented the appeal of magic and superstition. It seemed, indeed, as if the long prophesied third age of Buddhism[5] had come.

In 1222, in the midst of this chaotic period, Nichiren was born in a fishing village in south-eastern Japan. The outstanding quality of his character as shown even in his childhood was his zest for learning, not for mere intellectual knowledge, but for that under-

[2]Edwyn Bevan in his lecture '*The Hope of a World to Come underlying Judaism and Christianity*' maintains that *only* among Hebrews and Persians did the belief in a future consummation take root, and that this belief is what primarily distinguished Christianity from a Greek or Oriental mystery cult.

[3]This was suggested to me by Satomi who derived his idea from Tiele.

[4]See particularly Spinoza, appendix to Bk. V of the *Ethics* for a polemic against teleology.

[5]The age of the Latter Law, supposed to follow the 1st Millenium after Buddha's death, i.e., Age of the Perfect Law; and the 2nd Millenium, i.e., Age of the Copied Law.

standing which unifies and illumines all of life. From the time when he was twelve years old he prayed to the Bodhisattva Kokuzo, god of wisdom, to be made the wisest man in Japan.[6] This is significant as indicating that in his unique combination of prophetic and philosophic temperament, the philosophical was primary, and that his prophetic conviction grew gradually out of his increasing understanding of the essence of Buddhist truth in contrast to the blind aberrations of the Buddhists of his time. A man in whom prophetic zeal was primary could not have spent twenty years in study like Nichiren, seeking for the one truth of Buddhism, which he felt must lie hidden beneath the labyrinthine wanderings of the contemporary sects. Yet we may question whether a conviction resulting from study alone would ever have produced a fiery enthusiasm like that of Nichiren; there must always have been a prophetic quality in the keen ethical interest with which he sought for the truth. The unity he sought was never a mere abstract essence, but a principle which should unify all of human life. This practical interest is illustrated in his effort to apply his unifying principle to the political disunity of Japan, which troubled him as much as the wanderings of the misguided Buddhist sects. From boyhood he had worried over the Shōkyu war (1221) in which the Hōjōs (head of the feudal regime) had beaten the imperial party, and a mere subject had exiled three ex-emperors; for he felt that the nation as well as the religion should be one. This concern for the social implications of the truth marks Nichiren a prophet; he was never a 'pure' metaphysician, but always insisted on embodying the truth in his life. We shall see how this notion of the individual embodiment of the Truth gives a key to his development of a prophetic gospel out of a pantheistic metaphysics.

Nichiren's native ethical consciousness was fostered by his early rural life, which gave him an excellent vantage point from which to criticize with a good deal of personal authority the luxurious debilitating life of the capital. And his country origin might further have fostered his prophetic career by producing in him that intolerance which is almost essential to prophesy—a certain naiveté, a certain oversimplification due to isolation from the skepticism and conflicting viewpoints of the city, an isolation which encourages prophesy, in that dogmatism is usually necessary for convicton

[6] *Works,* Ryozonkaku Ed., 2nd. Series pp. 88 quoted by Satomi *Japanese Civilization* p. 120.

and personal assurance, while wide understanding of all the complexities of life paralyzes action and produces a sense of impotence.

But here again Nichiren eludes our dichotomies. He escaped the intellectual intolerance which his rural background might have engendered, through his zeal for comprehensive understanding (sought in years of study with learned priests of various sects) but this wide understanding never paralyzed his prophetic zeal. It only developed it and gave it a basis in tradition, for his social conscience and passion for unification made him wring out of his varied learning a truly prophetic conviction expressing itself in the strongest *moral in*tolerance of all the abuses of contemporary Buddhism. This intolerance was no naive oversimplification; it was a gradual growth, based on deep understanding of the principles of the various sects and their relation to the essence of Buddhist tradition. He even practiced the Nembuts[7] for a time in his youth; in his first essay he praised the esoteric Shingon ritual;[8] he studied the deepest thought of Zen at Kamakura, of Tendai at Mt. Hiei, as well as Hinduism and Confucianism, all the while seeking diligently to find out the central and unique truth of Buddhism. And gradually he came to feel that this central truth was expressed in the Lotus Scripture, the Saddharma Pundarīka or Hokke-kyō (Myō-hō-renge kyō in Sinico-Japanese). The more he studied it, the more light did he find in it concerning the problems of his time, and the stronger grew his conviction that most of the Japanese sects of the time were wandering in the dark. Particularly to the point in this connection were the passages in the Lotus Scripture describing the various kinds of mistaken Buddhists who should degrade the Law in the latter age. Nichiren found that these prophesies applied with extraordinary aptness to the vagaries of the contemporary sects in their departure from the True Law of Buddhism: the occult ritualism of Shingon, the easy-way salvation by faith of Amidism, the disciplinarian formalism of the Ritsu monks who sought only their own salvation, the excessive 'devilish' independence of Zen.

Continued study of the Hokke only deepened Nichiren's con-

[7]The practice of calling upon Amida, Lord of the Western Paradise. *Works* p. 1770 (ed. Katō, Tokyo, 1904).

[8]This casts a significant light on the Shingon elements in his final graphic representation of his truth in the "Mandala" where the union of the Eternal Diamond World with the phenomenal world is distinctly reminiscent of Shingon teachings.

viction of the errors of all existing forms of Buddhism, and, what was still more important, aroused his personal sense of mission. For the Lotus is full of passages praising those who preach its Truth and live its gospel, particularly in the latter degenerate age:

> "Revere the Truth revealed in this holy book, and preach it to others! Anyone who will fulfill this task, so difficult to do, is entitled to attain the Way of Buddha beyond comparison. He is the child of Buddha, the eyes of the world, and will be praised by all Buddhas."[9]

Particularly to be praised, according to the Lotus, is the man who lives its Truth in the latter age and suffers manifold persecutions for its sake:

> "Just as the light of the sun and moon
> Expels all dimness and darkness,
> So *this man,* living and working in the world,
> Repels the gloom (of illusion) of all beings."[10]

In 1261 Nichiren set forth in a general way[11] how such a man, 'reading' the Lotus with his life, should be the leader of Japan:

> "One who would propagate the Buddhist truth, by having convinced himself of the five principles, is entitled to become the leader of the Japanese nation. One who knows that the Lotus of Truth is the king of all scriptures, knows the truth of the religion.... If there were no one who 'read' the Lotus of Truth, there could be no leader of the nation; without a leader, the nation would do naught but be bewildered."

Many of the prophesies in the Lotus are concerned with the persecutions which the man who embodies it in the latter age must endure. These descriptions agreed so well with the persecutions which followed Nichiren that he began to be convinced that he must be the man foretold:

> "There are many in Japan who read and study the Lotus of Truth....but there is none who is abused because of (his revering) the Lotus of Truth....The one who really reads it is none other than I, Nichiren, who put in practice the text, 'We shall not care for bodily life, but do our best for the sake of the in-

9 *Sacred Books of the East.* vol. xxi p. 242-243, v. 38-41.

10 *ibid.* p. 369.

11 *Works* p. 427, quoted in Anesaki, *Nichiren, the Buddhist Prophet,* p. 43 (Harvard University Press, 1916) I am indebted to Professor Anesaki for almost all the factual material in this paper.

comparable Way.' Then I, Nichiren, am the one, supreme one, the pioneer of the Lotus of Truth."[12]

As Nichiren became more deeply convinced that he was the man foretold in the Lotus, all the prophesies therein came to have increasing meaning for him, in that they related him intimately with the distant past and hoped-for future, setting him in the noble line of those Bodhisattvas who had in all ages sacrificed their own Nirvana in order to further universal enlightenment, the goal toward which the fundamental nature of things was working. The ultimate attainment of their goal was foretold aeons ago, as described in the Lotus, by the Buddha Sakyamuni who declared, "I have always from eternity been instructing and quickening all these beings";[13] who had announced himself the commander (in the coming fight against vice and illusion) and "agreed to raise us mortal beings to the rank of Buddha."

These are the parts of the Lotus which especially inspired Nichiren's prophetic conviction—the assurances that there is a purpose in the universe working toward universal enlightenment and destined ultimately to accomplish it through the instrumentality of Bodhisattvas in all ages, particularly in the latter age through Nichiren himself who is one of these millions of "saints-out-of-earth" in whose presence Buddha declared the vyàkarana. Nichiren had no memory of having been present when the Buddha's prophetic assurance of ultimate attainment (vyàkarana) was declared to all the Bodhisattvas, but he wondered if he was not perhaps there after all, for "in the present I am unmistakeably the one who is realizing the Lotus of Truth. Then in the future I am surely destined to participate in the Communion of the Holy Place, as Buddha promised to all the Bodhisattvas. Inferring the past from the present and future, I should think I must have been present at the communion in the sky. The present assures the future destiny and the future destiny is inconceivable without its cause in the past. The present, future, and past cannot be isolated from one another."[14]

Nichiren himself united the present with past as well as with future by embodying in his prophetic concern for the future the Lotus tradition of the long line of Bodhisattvas, but to him this

[12]Letter to Lord Nanjō, *Works* p. 524, quoted by Anesaki, p. 50.

[13]*Sacred Books of the East* p. 293.

[14]*Works*, pp. 959-964, quoted in Anesaki p. 84.

link was far more than a mere historical connection. He believed that his person was "the key to the efficacious working of the everlasting Truth, which has its origin in eternity and is destined to prevail forever in the future."[15]

We are dealing here with metaphysics as well as with history, or, more exactly, with history as the expression of a creative, active, metaphysical Reality. This attitude toward history immediately gives it reality as an expression of the 'Absolute'[16]; this means that process is real and progress is possible. But the progress is achieved only through the embodiment of the Truth, or ultimate Reality, in the lives of individuals. Nichiren hints at this doctrine in speaking of himself as the "key to the efficacious working of the everlasting Truth." As Anesaki puts it,[17] the Truth abides eternally, but it is an abstraction, a dead law, without the person who perpetuates the life of the Truth. The individual is the indispensable organ of the cosmic process; it depends upon him for the realization of its purposes, and he at the same time may be said to depend upon it for his very reality.[18] The significant point in this doctrine of embodiment which differentiates it from most pantheistic thought is that it does not content itself[19] with describing what *is* as divine; it teaches the divine character of the 'nature of things' but insists that this divine character or Truth must be expressed in us, through our own efforts,[20] if it is to become effective. This effectiveness actually depends on us;—here is a gospel of what *ought to be*, with a distinct basis for individual responsibility—abundant inspiration for prophets!

We begin to see how it was that prophesy could arise out of Tendai metaphysics, given Nichiren's personal zeal for knowing

[15]Anesaki p. 68.

[16]This word should be used with caution, lest it suggest unwarranted parallels in western philosophy.

[17]p. 28.

[18]Thus he achieves metaphysical as well as historical status. Cf. C. A. Bennett on the "need to be real" as characteristic of the mystic in his determination to achieve union with reality. *A Philosophical Study of Mysticism*, p. 50-51 ff. (Yale Univ. Press, 1923).

[19]Here lies what seems to me the great distinction between Nichirenism and, for example, Stoicism, which never (so far as I am aware) developed a doctrine of process.

[20]i.e. not merely expressed in us in the inevitable unconscious way in which all things cannot help expressing the "nature of things."

the One Truth with its ethical implications and embodying it in his life. What was unusual about Nichiren among prophets was his interest in the formulation and systematization of the metaphysical truth which he embodied. The inspiration for this metaphysics he drew likewise from the Lotus, whose second part expounds the doctrine of the "Buddhist Logos" in its eternal aspect, teaching[21] that "so long as the Buddhists regard their master as a man who achieved Buddhahood at a certain time, they fail to recognize the true person of Buddha, who in reality from eternity has been Buddha, the lord of the world. So long as the vision of Buddhists is thus limited, they are unaware of their own true being, which is as eternal as Buddha's own primeval nature and enlightenment. The Truth is eternal, therefore the Person who reveals it is also eternal, and the relation between master and disciples is nothing but an original and primeval kinship."

> "Things come and pass away, but truth abides; men are born and disappear, but life itself is imperishable. Buddahood is neither a new acquisition nor a quality destined to destruction. The One who embodies the cosmic Truth, Buddha, the Tathagata, neither is born nor dies, but lives and works from eternity to eternity; his Buddhahood is primeval and his inspiration everlasting. How, then, can it be otherwise with any other beings, if only they realize this truth and live in full consciousness of it? Thus, the revelation of the everlasting life discloses the infinite measure of the Tathagata's life, which means at the same time the share of the true Buddhists in the eternal life of Buddha, and in the inextinguishable endurance of the Truth."[22]

This 'Buddhology' depends upon Tendai metaphysics, whose essential truth is contained in the concept of mutual interpenetration or participation. According to this view,[23] each living being has inherent in him all the qualities which make up the rest of sentient life; he is not real apart from the universal order of nature but only in relation to all life. The individual achieves enlightenment by finding his place in the fundamental nature of the

[21] Anesaki, p. 26.

[22] Anesaki p. 27-8.

[23] From here I paraphrase Anesaki's presentation of Tendai metaphysics in his appendix to *Nichiren the Buddhist Prophet.*

universe (dhammatā), realizing in his life as well as in his ideas the truth that no individual can subsist or have reality by himself. The enlightened person lives the life of the universal self; he is called a Tathāgata, who has found his own real nature in the fundamental nature of all existences. He is one who has become truth, become insight, and thereby identified himself with the universe. Buddha in this his true person thus means the nature of the universe, at work for aeons enlightening all beings[24] by the One Road (described by Anesaki as "the unity of purpose, methods, and power in all the Buddhas of all ages").

Nichiren's own formulation of this doctrine of mutual interpenetration and the primeval Buddhahood immanent in our own souls is expressed most effectively in an essay written in the calm of his retirement at Minobu in 1279:[25]

> "In everything, in grasses and trees, in mountains and streams, even in earth and dust, there are present the truths of existence of the ten realms of existence (dharma-dhatu) which participate in one another; while the Sole Road of the Lotus of the Perfect Truth, which is immanent in our own souls, pervades the paradises in the ten quarters and is everywhere present in its entirety....All these fruits are inherent in our own soul, and the soul is in reality identical with the Tathāgata of the primeval enlightenment (in his eternal entity) who is furnished with the three aspects of his personality. How can there be any other truth besides the soul (in this sense)?.....

[24]This assertion, that a direction toward universal enlightenment is inherent in the very order of the universe, is based on an *a priori* which we cannot divide into separate elements without destroying its distinctive character. It should be illuminated by an understanding of its metaphysical presuppositions, and perhaps even more by a historical analysis of the genetic background (if we may use such an expression) of the *a priori*. Still more important is the effort on our part to enter imaginatively into the Japanese Buddhist *Weltanschauung*. It is difficult for us to sense the profound power of the symbolic ideology which identifies Buddha whose body is the cosmos, who thus represents the universe as a whole with Buddha the enlightening influence in the world. This identification seems to me more subtle, though perhaps no more rational, than the Stoic identification of the Logos, as the order of the universe—with the Logos as indwelling Reason enlightening men. Their identification was originally in large part the result of a verbal ambiguity and never to my knowledge developed a doctrine of process—The Logos was the Reason already in the world rather than *directing* the world *toward* universal enlightenment. Cf. Origen's Christian and neo-Platonic working out of a similar Logos doctrine with the idea of a future consummation.

[25]H. Nichiren *Works*, pp. 1892-1913 ff., quoted in Anesaki p. 101.

"The perfection of truth in the Buddha's soul and the same perfection in our soul are one, and it is inherent in us, and to be realized by ourselves. Thus, there is no truth or existence besides the soul....

"The Tathāgata of the primeval enlightenment is furnished with these three categories of reality; his body, or substance, is the cosmos, or the realm of truth (dharma-dhātu) extending in ten directions; his essence, which is soul, is identical with the cosmos; and his manifestation in glories is manifest in the cosmos also....

"The Paradise, or Land of Purity, is the realm of serene light, and is pure, exempt from all depravities; it exists in the soul of every being....

"....Illusion occurs when we seek the Buddha, the Truth, and the Paradise outside of our own self. One who has realized this soul is called the Tathagata. When this state is once attained, (we realize that) the cosmos in ten directions is our own body, our own soul, and our manifestation, because the Tathāgata *is* our own body and soul....

"When the truth of the mutual participation between the one and the many, between the particular and the universal, is fully realized, we shall know that everything and all things are found in each existence in the present life.....All truths revealed during the lifetime of the Master are only truths existent in ourselves. Know this, and your own entity is revealed....Thus maintain harmony with the Buddhas of all times and live the life of the Lotus of Truth! Thereby you will attain the final enlightenment without impediment, and know the relation between self-perfection and the enlightening of others."

This passage illustrates Nichiren's mysticism even better than his metaphysics, but it seems contradictory to the prophetic passages in which he denounces the vices of his time and in which, as we shall see, he points to a consummation in the future when the world shall be moralized and live according to the True Law. In the passage we have just quoted the present world is represented as a paradise, yet we know that Nichiren more clearly than any of his contemporaries realized the ignorance and depravity of his age, which he denounced in terms hardly suggesting the celestial character of the present constitution of the world![26]

[26]From Nichiren's essay "Risshō Ankoku Ron" written 1259. Quoted by Anesaki p. 37.

> "Woe unto them! They have missed the entrance into the gate that leads to the true Buddhism, and have fallen into the prison-house of false-teachings. They are fettered, entangled, bewildered. Whither will their blind wanderings lead them?
>
> "Ye men of little faith, turn your minds and trust yourselves at once to the unique Truth of the Righteous Way! Then ye shall see that the three realms of existence are (in reality) the Kingdom of Buddha, which is in no way subject to decay; and that the worlds in the ten directions are all Lands of Treasures, which are never to be destroyed. The Kingdom is changeless, and the Lands eternal. Then how shall your bodies be otherwise than secure, and your minds serene in enlightenment?"

From such statements it might be inferred that the only change necessary to make this world perfect is a change in state of mind! But such a view would seem to negate the passages in which Nichiren points to a consummation in the future, when political conditions as well as individual view-points shall have been changed in accordance with Buddhist principles. How then is this latter view to be reconciled with the doctrine of the ideality of the present world, so clearly set forth in the two passages quoted above?

Have we a contradiction here, an inconsistency, that Nichiren could in one essay speak of the spiritual paradise as present in our souls now; in another describe it as an ideal political and social as well as spiritual consummation in the future? Or is this another illustration of Nichiren's favorite method of analysis—combining two opposites and explaining each by reference to the other, thus illustrating the fundamental truth that no individual thing is itself except in relation to its opposite, and that the total reality includes both in a whole? No, the apparent contradiction here is a phenomenon deeper than any pet method of Nichiren's. It is common to all the mystics. Professor Bennett of Yale has most illuminatingly analyzed it in his "Philosophical Study of Mysticism"[27]. The mystic experience, he suggests, is a synthesis of two paradoxical propositions:

"All is well"

"All can be made good"

The first proposition asserts that reality is good now—thus Nichiren asserts the inner presence of the Paradise. The person who realizes

[27]Especially in ch. xi and xii.

this somehow achieves finality now. But the mystic insight, though in a sense final, is still at the same time only a foretaste of a good which in a very imperfect society must be worked out, so that in the future all men may achieve finality. Again Nichiren fits into Professor Bennett's scheme, though the inspiration which made him believe that "all could be made good" was probably very different from that of most mystics. For he derived his confidence in the ultimate universal realization of the Truth from his study of the vyākarana passages in the Lotus Scripture. These prophesies gave him assurance regarding the future, and also encouraged him to face the evils of the present by interpreting them as marks of the third degenerate age which heralded the "approach of the sages."[28] This consummation is to be realized by all beings not only sages"[28] after which the light of the Lotus should illumine the whole world.

This consummation is to be realized by all beings not only individually but as a community, even as a state, whose center is to be the *Kaidan* or Holy See which Nichiren established as base for the propagation of the Lotus of Truth, representing the spiritual paradise on earth.

> "When, at a certain future time, the union of the state law and the Buddhist Truth shall be established, and the harmony between the two completed, both sovereign and subjects will faithfully adhere to the Great Mysteries. Then the golden age, such as were the ages under the reign of the sage-kings of old, will be realized in these days of degeneration and corruption, in the time of the Latter Law. Then the establishment of the Holy See will be completed, by imperial grant and the edict of the Dictator, at a spot comparable in its excellence with the Paradise of Vulture Peak. We have only to wait for the coming of the time. Then the moral law will be achieved in the actual life of mankind. The Holy See will then be the seat where all

[28]"I, Nichiren, might not be the messenger but still my time corresponds with the time. Moreover, my undstanding of the law is exceedingly deep and sound, so that I am going to take a pioneer's task in proclaiming this Law until the sage shall appear. But when this law once appears, then all the laws which have been preached by many priests and scholars during the ages of the Right and Fanciful Law shall be as if they were the stars after the rising of the sun....
"After this time, all influences, inspirations and effects of Buddha's images and priests in the temple and monasteries which were founded during the former ages,..shall disappear and only this Great Law shall spread all over the world." (*Works,* 580-1, quoted by Satomi)

> men of the three countries and the whole *Jambu-Dvipa* (world) will be initiated into the mysteries of confession and expiation....."[29]

"We have only to wait" hardly means premillinarian acquiescence, for Nichiren was the most strenuous of Buddhists, ever advocating ardent violent propagation of the Truth. And elsewhere he describes the duty of the true Buddhist during the evil times: the loyal subject must protest against the rulers when he feels that they are not conforming to the Buddhist Law; only so does he fulfil his obligation to the rulers. Obligation is the focal point in Nichiren's ethical scheme; its application to political life grows out of his general ethical scheme which is based on this principle of recompense for indebtedness. A man's three objects of reverence should be his parents, his teachers, his rulers; to each of whom he should discharge his indebtedness by passing on in turn what he received from them. Thus we must pay our debt to our parents not only by revering them while they are alive, but also by propagating the life they gave us; so to our teachers by propagating the truth they taught us, and to our government by cooperating in the maintenance of law and order and by criticising when it acts contrary to right principles.

> "If you would be free from the offence committed by the country as a whole, make remonstrance to the rulers, and be yourself prepared for death or exile! Is it not said in the Scripture, 'Never shrink from sacrificing the body for the sake of the Incomparable Way'?....That we have, from the remotest past down to the present, not attained Buddhahood, is simply due to our cowardice, in that we have always been afraid of these perils and have not dared to stand up publicly for the Truth. The future will never be otherwise, so long as we remain cowards." (*Works* p. 1937-8 quoted Anesaki p. 118)

This principle of mutual indebtedness is the correlate in the ethical realm of the metaphysical principle of mutual participation: the dependence of each upon all and the inseparable tie binding the individual to the community in which he lives. Because this is so, individuals cannot achieve enlightenment until the community is moralized, nor can the community become perfect until the individuals do their utmost to "protect the moral law" and

[29] *Works* p. 2053 quoted by Anesaki p. 110.

shape the nation in accordance with it. For the nation is the natural unit with which to start, though the ultimate realization must include a world of moralized nations. This political application of Nichiren's doctrines has been set forth by a modern advocate of "Nichirenism"—Kishio Satomi.[30] He quotes significant passages of political bearing from Nichiren's works and then amplifies the modern implications of his master's doctrine of the immanent spiritual paradise and its ultimate universal realization:

> "In brief, my religion is the law of the political path."
> (Nichiren, *Works* p. 391)
>
> "The priests among my disciples shall be the Masters to the Emperors or the ex-Emperors, and the laymen shall take seats in the Ministry; and thus in the future, all the nations of the world shall adore this law."
> (Nichiren, *Works* p. 583)

After quoting these and similar passages, Satomi goes on to say:

> "Religion is intended to redeem living beings and their environment."
>
> "According to Nichiren, the heavenly paradise has not an allegorical existence, but is the highest aim of living beings in the living world, in other words, it must be actually built on the earth. For such a fundamental humanistic aim we must all strive. The true commandment has not its being apart from the vow. If one fully comprehends his thought, and will strive for it, then the signification of one's life will be realized. This thought is the most important idea of Nichiren's religion, and, in fact, the peculiarity of Nichirenism consists therein. For him, to protect and extend the righteousness over the world, through the country and to everybody is the true task of life.
>
> ". . . . In the religious sense, the unification of the world or the salvation of the world is impossible unless the religion and the country assimilate. . . . . .
>
> "According to Nichiren, in the degenerate days of the Latter Law, there is no Buddhist commandment outside of our vow for the reconstruction of the country and the realization of the Heavenly Paradise in the world. Even the so-called virtuous sage, if he does not embrace this great and strong vow, in other words only enjoys virtue individually, such a sage is pretty useless.
>
> "Although a man be imperfect, let him carry out Bud-

[30] In his book *Japanese Civilization and the Principles of Nichirenism*, (Kegan Paul, 1923)

> dha's task with the strong vow for the realization of Buddha's Kingdom, or with preaching or with economical (sic) power or with knowledge of sciences or with all sorts of such things. We can find the true significance of religion, of commandment, of human life, therein.
> ....."The protection of moral law is the sole task of human life."

We have quoted at some length from Satomi to illustrate the significant prophetic and 'humanistic' gospel which modern Buddhists are developing out of Nichiren's doctrines of the spiritual paradise on earth and the dependence of the cosmic Truth upon individual embodiment for its complete realization. In the synthesis of these two aspects of his teaching, united in his stirring vision of cosmic process toward universal enlightenment, lies a mighty inspiration for prophesy. And whether such visions be based on Hebrew monotheism or Buddhist pantheism, our age, too, has need of individuals who shall embody the Truth and further the enlightenment of all beings!